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THE DIARY
OF
BROTHER BARTHOLOMEW.

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NANNERL AND HER TWO CHILDREN.

Bro. Bartholomew

THE DIARY
OF
BROTHER BARTHOLOMEW,

A MONK OF THE ABBEY OF MARIENTHAL, IN THE ODENWALD,
IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"THE SCHONBERG-COTTA FAMILY."

NEW YORK:
ROBERT CARTER & BROTHERS,
530 BROADWAY,
. 1871.

“They be not all faithless that are either weak in assenting to the truth, or stiff in maintaining things any way opposite to the truth of Christian doctrine. But as many as hold the foundation which is precious, though they hold it but weakly, and as it were by a slender thread, although they may frame many base and unsuitable things upon it, things that can not abide the trial of the fire ; yet shall they pass the fiery trial and be saved, which, indeed, have builded themselves upon the rock, which is the foundation of the Church. . . . But how many millions of them are known so to have ended their mortal lives, that the drawing of their breath hath ceased with the uttering of this faith, ‘Christ my Saviour, my Redeemer Jesus!’ And shall we say that such did not hold the foundation of the Christian faith?”—*A learned Discourse by Mr. Richard Hooker.*

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE supposed date of this Diary must account for its quaintness.

The truths stated in it are, the Editor believes, not more evangelical than are to be met with in the letters of Bernard of Clairvaux; and these truths, and the errors which grow up beside them, not more inconsistent with each other than many of the beliefs which, in those confused times, contrived to find an honest livelihood in the same mind. The mixture of shrewdness and childishness in the good monk would be the natural consequence of an experience so limited as his, and of the union of the intelligence of manhood with that habitual relinquishment of all manly freedom of thought and action which his rule required.

Brother Bartholomew's practical piety must have had many parallels in days when the Bible was daily read in the Benedictine abbeys, and monasteries were the industrial schools and penitentiaries of the nations.

The earnestness of his religion may serve to show the strength of that principle of life which

survived the malaria of the monastic system; whilst its deformed and stunted growth, in contrast with the quiet and steady progress of his friend, may illustrate the poisonous nature of the system which could paralyze and distort a life so real and so divine.

It is happy to think, that, amongst the millions who adhered to the ecclesiastical system of the Middle Ages, there were many who lived so near their Saviour, as to receive from His hands the antidote to all its poisons; but it is far happier to know, that there were thousands who lived so close to Him as to rise above its errors altogether, and to be content for His sake to be rejected of their generation.

THE DIARY
OF
BROTHER BARTHOLOMEW.

IN the name of our Lord Christ, and all His saints, and especially of our Lady His mother, patroness of this our Abbey of Marienthal, I, Bartholomew, a poor brother in the same venerable Abbey, governed according to the genuine and original rule of the holy Benedict, have undertaken to write a history, from day to day, of the things which mine eyes shall see and mine ears hear.

The thought of this chronicle has visited me frequently of late, often intruding on my hours of holy meditation, for which reason I endeavored to scare it away as a presumptuous suggestion from the Enemy; but seeing that, in spite of all my conjurations, and crossings, and repetitions of the Pater Noster and the Sacred Hours, it hath continued to force itself upon me (being even spoken to me in visions by the holy Benedict himself), I have concluded it to be a good thought,

well-pleasing to the saints, and have therefore resolved on executing it, and leaving these my humble memorials as a legacy to the Abbey, knowing that the common incidents of to-day are often as a strange and pleasant tale to those that come after : since which determination, my meditations have been no more disturbed—a further proof that the project is not from below.

In order to accomplish this design, parchment being somewhat costly, I have procured from the Prior the copy of an old manuscript, which none of us can read—not even our learned brother Lupacius, who has studied at Paris. The labor of effacing the former characters was great, they being carefully and thickly written, but I was cheered in my toil by the thought that I was destroying some of the works of the Evil One, the letters being of a very hideous and diabolical form, square and three-cornered, and very black, speckled moreover with a countless multitude of dots which skipped around them like wicked imps, making so ugly a confusion as no Christian could look at long without danger of distraction, much less have made. In every page, therefore, however I may fill it, it is a marvellous consolation to me to reflect that I am tilling so much ground reclaimed from the infidel.

I have lived all my life within the walls of the Abbey, and of the world beyond I know even as little as the Israelites did of the Promised Land when they believed the spies. Of my father and

mother I know nothing, nor do any of the brethren. I was found one winter morning, a helpless infant, lying on the threshold of the convent, wrapped in a few rags, with a label importing that my mother and father were dead, and entreating the holy brethren, for the love of God, to bring up the orphan, and teach him to offer masses for the souls of his parents.

At first, I have heard, the monks were sorely puzzled how to handle or what to do with me. An especial convocation was convened, in which it was determined to feed and cherish me as they would any other young and tender thing, and, after being baptized, I was assigned to the guardians of the hospital, with a room for my special use. But, one after another, the patience of the holy men was quite wearied out with my ceaseless cries and complainings, until it was resolved to commit me to the keeping of a respectable peasant woman in our village, called Magdalis Schröder. With her I grew to a healthy and merry boy, but the good monks always insist that the suavity of my temper at present is nothing less than a miracle, considering that so unmanageable and ill-natured a babe was never seen.

In my youth I had occasionally strong desires to see something of the world beyond our valley, that before my profession I might know what I was renouncing; but the brotherhood always withheld me, saying, that such a wish was like Eve's desire to be made wise by eating of the

Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil—that in the world nothing was to be learned but evil, and in the convent the knowledge of good. Their will was everything to me, and I unresistingly acquiesced; but I have often since thought that the evil lies nearer home, and that if I had to choose, I would not fly for refuge to a monastery. But what am I saying? The holy Benedict pardon me! All I mean is, that if, as they say, the earth is the same everywhere, as the heart certainly is, perhaps the heavens are also the same, and as near. I say this to Mother Magdalis sometimes, when she groans under her burdens and cares; yet, for myself, I have no wish to change. Here I have lived, and here, if the Lord and the Abbot will it so, will I die.

Nevertheless, I was not always so content.

At one time, when I was young, my heart felt strong, and fluttered, for freedom, as the Prior's birds flutter in the spring, or as the young buds throw off their casings in the forest on an April morning, and tremble and open in the sun and the warm winds.

I used to go often and visit my foster-mother. She is a widow, but she has two children—the best, she says, a poor widow ever had. It is true, Karl is a little wrong-headed and fiery now and then, but Nannerl, certainly every one must agree there are not many like her. It was not because of her large, violet-blue eyes, and her fresh color, like a rose—if a rose could change hue as she does

(of such things I am no judge)—she was a strong and healthy maiden, and that is enough—but for truth and goodness, and singleness of heart, I never saw any like her. She was like a manuscript of a psalm of thanksgiving, illuminated all round with holy images in fair colors, so joyous and in harmony. I often thought, when I looked at her, of the blessed words, “If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light”—so full of light, pleasant, cheering, fireside light was she within and without. I never passed her mother’s cottage any morning, how early soever—and I passed it often—but she was up before me, getting her brother’s breakfast, or doing her mother’s work, with her bright morning face, and her pleasant words.

Now it came to pass, when I went one evening to the cottage with a basket of broken meat from the Abbey, I thought they all seemed happier than usual; Nannerl’s face was brighter than ever, but it seemed to be shining with some hidden joy. At length, when she left the room to put aside the contents of the basket, Mother Magdalis told me there was to be a wedding in the family—young Hans Reichardt, the Abbey carpenter, had asked Nannerl’s hand. They had, she said, liked one another long; and before many weeks they would probably be coming to the Abbey church together.

I could not exactly comprehend why Magdalis should make such a festival of this; I could not

tell why, but I had never much admired young Reichardt, yet I congratulated them all as honestly as I could.

“It is a good providence,” said my foster-mother. “I am old, and the children have no father, and it is a blessed thing for them to have a home.”

Nannerl’s face glowed with quiet pleasure when I wished her joy of her new prospects. I did feel glad at their joy, but somehow I was less at home there that evening than I had ever been before—I felt left out of the circle. Hans Reichardt came to see his bride, and I took my departure early. Mother Magdalis’s words rung in my ears, “It is a blessed thing to have a home.” Home!—the word came to my heart with a new meaning that evening. *It means very much*; and for the first time I felt *this* the convent could never be; a shelter from wind and rain it might be—a refuge for the weary—a refectory for the hungry—a place to eat and sleep and live in—but home meant *something more*.

Who had shut me out from this? Who had a right to say that this word, this holy thing, might never be mine?

For many days these things rankled in my heart, and sad havoc they made there. Till then, I had not a want beyond the convent walls and the society of the brethren; now, my heart had looked beyond the old walls; and they girded me in like a prison. I was not then bound by any vows, and it was well.

I did not venture to tell any of the brethren what I felt; I did not believe it to be sin, but I knew they would all misunderstand me.

This lasted until one of our evening Scripture readings—for in our convent we still adhere to the rule of reading through a portion of the Scriptures in the winter evenings. I seated myself among the rest, prepared to be once more a weary listener to the oft-told tale. (Alas! how little I knew of its blessed meaning!) The reader stood at his desk, intoning the words in his lulling sing-song; the appointed monk went his rounds with the lantern, to see that none of us fell asleep. The monotonous voice of the reader—the uniform tread of the lantern-bearer—the monotonous recurrence of convent duties—all grated like so many instruments of torture on my impatient heart. In health, we do not notice habitual sights and sounds, but in a fever, the slow dropping of water from the eaves seems at each fall to eat into the brain. And this, I thought, is to be for life! My heart sickened and sank under the intolerable burden of countless to-morrows, all like to-day. And beside this weary circle of fruitless toil arose the haunting thought of *home*—fresh springs of love, ever fresh—life growing, widening, deepening, day by day around us, and all centering in that inner sanctuary of love, *the home*.

I was aroused from my dreams and murmurs by some words from the gospel, which fell on

my ear suddenly, as if I heard them for the first time:—

“For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

For the first time, the idea of self-sacrifice came to me with all the exalted joy the thought can bring—the thought of laying down myself, my life, for others. I arose from that evening reading strengthened and refreshed, for I had a purpose—and life is never quite barren to us if we have one living purpose to sow in it, to grow and to bring forth fruit.

The thought of His life took possession of me. I longed, I prayed, I strove to be made like Him—the holy child Jesus—like Him who went about doing good.

I made a collection in the convent, to furnish Nannerl's house—I labored in the convent garden to rear vegetables for the sick—I traveled leagues through the pine forests, in the frost and snow, to visit them—but the more I read of the life of Jesus, the more unattainable the perfect model seemed. Are not the stars as far from the mountains as from the valleys? The more I heard of the law of God, the more I saw how far it carried its claims upon the heart; and the heart was precisely the thing which all my efforts could not reach.

I could labor for the sick, I could toil and plead for Nannerl and her husband, but I could not

expel the repining thought from my heart when I came back from her bright fireside to these dull, cold, convent walls.

But yet again God came to me and completed the work He had begun. The second part of my text healed the wound the first had made. How strange it was that I did not see it all at once!—

“The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, *and to give his life a ransom for many.*”

The ransom is needed—for whom? Surely, for the sentenced criminal—for those who, not being able to fulfill the perfect law, can read in it nothing but their condemnation—that is, *for me.*

The ransom is paid—for whom? Surely for those who need it. *The ransom is paid;*—then the prisoner is free. *I am free!* “There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” It is faith in this which gives strength to walk, not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.

From that time, my whole life has been changed. *Jesus*, the Son of God, the Lamb of God, our Ransom, our Pattern, our Friend, He has redeemed me—I am His, and His cause is mine. The self-denial, which had been impossible as a sacrifice of expiation, became the joy of my life as a sacrifice of thanksgiving. With the eye of Him who died for us—and dying, saved us—watching our lives, what is not possible? I learned that before we can be servants of God, we must be made children of God.

Since then, I have lost those restless yearnings for an earthly home. I have a home in heaven, and my Father has sent me hither, for a little while, to call more of His children to Him, and to minister to all who need:—thus journeying, and singing as I go, I am hastening *homeward*. I am happy, and can rejoice heartily in the happiness of Nannerl and Reichardt. In the convent, as well as elsewhere, we can bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

And, perhaps, in this tumultuous world, it is well that there should be some set apart on high, so that the strife and eager chases of the present may sound to them faint as those of the past, with no seasons but the seasons of heaven;—like church-towers rising above the common homes of men, yet echoing with deep tones their joys and sorrows, and telling them, amidst their toils and pleasures, how the time is passing.

Yet, if any ask my advice as to leading a religious life, I usually say, "My child, in your home you are sure God has placed you. There He is sure to bless you. Be quite sure that He calls you away before you change. He knows what work to give His servants, and in good time He is sure to let them know."

April 9.—S. Gregory Nazianzen, Bishop and Doctor.

I am just returned from a preaching tour amongst the villages of the forest (anciently called

of Odin), with two choristers and a deacon, to celebrate the mass, and preach the Easter sermons.

Much grieved at discovering in some of the peasants' houses a superstitious reverence and fear of the old heathen gods (or demons)—the people in many places using pagan charms and incantations against them, and even endeavoring to propitiate them with wheaten cakes and other offerings. I told them that either the old gods and goddesses were *nothing*, and therefore could do nothing either for or against them; or they were *fiends*, and God was stronger than they; and that, when affrighted at night, or in lonely places, they should have recourse to prayer and to the sign of the holy cross. Some places, where the apparitions and wicked demons seem to have been more than commonly malignant, I purified and exorcised, sprinkling them with holy water. Nevertheless, in my sermons, and at all times, I told the people, that it is only sin which gives the devil power over us, and that none but those whose hearts are turned to God, through hearty repentance and true faith, are safe anywhere. I mourn much that these things are not oftener proclaimed by our brethren; also, that they have given the peasants images of saints instead of their old gods—which they often confound, in their blindness, in a very profane manner.

As we went on our way, I and my companions made the woods resound, from time to time,

with psalms and holy hymns, thus lightening the way; and thus also, towards nightfall, effectually keeping the powers of darkness avault, the deacon Theodore being of somewhat a fearsome spirit. At other times, I meditated on some holy text, the theme of my next day's discourse, refreshing myself with the living bread wherewith I afterwards fed the people. At night, we cut down branches from the trees, and made palisades around our beasts of burden, which carried the holy vessels and vestments; lighting watchfires, also, to scare away wild beasts and other evil things.

Once I awoke at dead of night, hearing a strange rustling amongst the fir twigs which covered the ground, and a cracking of boughs, mingled with stifled, unearthly cries. Moreover, by the moonlight, which came down in strange and shifting patterns on the bare trunks, and on the ground, I perceived some dark object flitting rapidly away amongst the distant pine-stems. Whereat I arose, and, stirring the watchfires, commenced singing the fourth Psalm in a loud voice. When I had concluded the last verse, crossing myself on brow and breast, I laid me down in peace and slept.

In the morning our best ass was gone. Without it we could scarcely proceed, the other beasts being slow-paced and old; yet without it we feared to return, the creature being a favorite with our lord the Abbot. Wherefore, kneeling

down, we laid our trouble before God, pleading that it was His errand on which we were journeying, and telling Him of our sore need; our lord the Abbot being withal a man of a hasty spirit. How marvelously He heard the prayers of His servants, the sequel will show.

A few days thereafter, I preached in a certain village, on the commandments, dwelling, amongst the rest, on the sin of theft. Great power was present to smite the consciences of the hearers. Many wept, and before the close of my sermon, one came forth, and before them all cried out, "Lay on me what penance you will. It is I who stole the Abbot's ass."

The whole assembly were greatly moved, and would have fallen on the thief, but hastily descending from the pulpit, I went to him, and as he knelt before me, I said—

"Thou seest, my son, that the eyes of the Lord are in every place, seeing in the darkness of the pine forest at midnight, as in the assembly at midday. Thou canst not fly from Him, for He is everywhere; thou needest not fly from Him, for He is ready to forgive. It is because thou hast not known His grace, that thou hast despised His law. But if now thou repentest, and with thine heart believest, I, although a sinner as thou art, absolve thee from thy sin." He had been a very fierce robber, the terror of the neighborhood.

After the service he brought the ass to the

door. As I left the place, the people thronged around us to seek my blessing; and lifting up my hands I blessed them, many weeping and kissing my hands. But I turned and said, "Mourn not, my brethren, that ye see me no more; but look, I pray you, to Him whose arms were stretched out on the cross to save you—whose hands are lifted up always to bless you. Look to Him!"

The robber went forth with us, although the deacon Theodore much disliked his company. He spoke not a word for many miles, walking, with head bowed down, at my ass's head.

At last, as it grew dusk, and we were entering on a thick part of the Odenwald, said to be infested with plunderers, brother Theodore came to my side and whispered—

"Were it not better to send this man away? He may have too many friends here."

But I answered, in the words of the wise king, "The hearts of men are as the rivers of water; He turneth them whithersoever He will. Let us not hinder His work on this poor soul."

At length the shadows fell around us, and, coming to a glade of the forest, we alighted for our night's encampment. The robber continued with us, serving us much in hewing branches and lighting our fires, he being more skilled in such work than we.

After offering our vesper prayer and hymn, I lay down to sleep, none making me afraid.

The robber sat watching the fires, whilst brother Theodore lay, with half-closed eyes, watching him. But the peace of God kept my heart, and I slept soundly.

About midnight I awoke, startled by the crackling of the watchfires. The robber sat close to my head, stirring one of the fires with a huge pine-log. I arose and seated myself opposite to him.

"Father," he said, leaning on the log, his dark strong features glowing in the red light—"thou art a man of peace, but thou hast courage; knowest thou who I am?"

"I know, my son," I replied, "that thou hast been a great sinner; but I trust one stronger than thou is melting thy heart."

"I am he whom the peasants call Otho the Thunderbolt," he said. "My name has been a terror to thousands, yet thou fearest me not. I have many bold followers in this forest; if I were to give one of my gathering-cries, in half-an-hour you would see fifty men around these fires."

"The name of the Lord," I said "is more terrible than yours, my son; but to those who trust in it, it is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe. The voice of the Lord is stronger than yours; and legions of His angels encamp around those that fear Him. I have not much courage, but I have faith, which is stronger."

"I know it, father," he replied; "I, too, know

that the voice of God is strong, for it has made my heart tremble like a reed. He is mighty, and He is against me, for I have sinned."

"Nay, He is for you," I said, "for He came to save the sinner."

Then he unfolded to me the terrible story of his life of violence, and I unfolded to him the good tidings.

It was a strange chapel—the wind roaring in the tops of the pine-trees, and driving the clouds overhead; and a strange audience—the wolves howling around the fires—the chief of a robber band; but are not all places holy for holy words?

And the heart which had never quailed before man, but had quivered in the grasp of the Almighty, melted as a child's at the story of the love and sacrifice of Jesus.

"Father," he said, "can you admit one like me within your holy walls? The meanest office would be welcome to me—the meaner the fitter for me, if only I might work for the poor I have robbed."

"Nay," I said, "go and tell thy companions what great things the Lord hath done for thee. Mayhap they too will repent and believe."

"I will return," he said, bitterly, "if you will not receive me; but it is scarcely possible for one like me to lead an honest life amongst those who have known me. They would say, The old wolf has clothed himself in sheepskin, but he shall not deceive us by that."

“Go, then,” I said, “and seek to restore your comrades, and afterwards repair to Marienthal: there ye shall all find an asylum and a sanctuary.”

Before the morning broke he was gone.

The sun arose, throwing slanting rays up across the pinestems, the birds awoke and sang, and the leaves trembled and glittered with the drops of dew—and we went on our way rejoicing: for, that night, had not the day-spring from on high arisen on one who sat in darkness and the shadow of death?

Otho the Thunderbolt, and three of his companions, are now inmates of our Abbey. We think it best to employ them as much as possible. They therefore fell our firewood, draw our water, keep our cattle, and help to clear more of the forest for tillage. The rest of their time they spend in learning and reciting psalms and litanies, and in listening to our solemn services. Otho, moreover, contrives to find leisure to weave mats and nets, the price of which he lays up for future restitution.

This event has greatly strengthened those amongst us who are truly seeking to lead a religious life, and has urged us afresh to prayer. But some, alas! continue idle and vain, caring for none of these things—for here, as elsewhere, our Lord and the devil have both their disciples.

June 7.—Vigil of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist.

We have entertained an angel since last I wrote. The holy Abbot Bernard, of Clairvaux, has stayed with us a day and a night—ever memorable at Marienthal. He came to preach the Crusade.

It is marvelous into what a ferment his coming has thrown the whole of Germany. People flocked from the towns and villages to meet him, bringing with them the sick on litters, that he might heal them with his touch—those esteeming themselves blessed who could kiss his hands. The churches were filled, and even the churchyards, when he preached, and men have taken the cross by hundreds. At Marienthal the peasants wept and sobbed at his sermon, although they could not understand a word he said—at which I marvel greatly.

Scarcely could they have received the Lord Christ himself with more devoted reverence: indeed, I wonder much that they should pay such homage to the words of His servant, and so little to His own. I fear for them, lest they be honoring the voice more than the words. Yet truly he is a man of a noble presence, and of a very lowly mind.

In the pulpit his eyes flash like flame, but in the confessional they are soft as any dove's. His stature is low, but his brow and bearing are so calm, and so full of gentle command, that the proudest bow naturally before him—not thinking of refusing what he never thinks of demanding.

He seems worn out by the fervor of his piety and the severity of his life; yet the ardor which is wasting his frame is mild as the first sunshine of May to all else. At the Abbot's table, more than once, I heard him laugh joyously as a child. Nevertheless, there is something in him I would shrink from encountering as a foe.

When one of us remarked on the austerities which had so emaciated him, he said—

“The cross of Christ is such a burden as wings are to a bird—bearing it aloft.”*

To us he spoke as St. Paul might of the inward conflict, and the inward strength, the grace of God and the reconciliation wrought by Christ. “Blessed,” he says, “are those to whom God has taught the meaning of the words, ‘Ye are my friends; whatsoever I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.’”

In the Abbey he left behind him a holy calm. We felt that the place was holy ground, because He who dwelleth in His saints had been there.

He gave a lamentable account of the world and the Church—bishops and priests buying and selling holy things, Christian princes fighting one another; and, meantime, the Turk ruling in the Holy Land, and the heretics—Cathari, Paulicians, and Manichees—poisoning the wells of Christian life within the camp.

There are many of these heretics, he says, on the Rhine, and in Bohemia, and the south of

* See “St. Bernard's Letters.”

France, who deny the Divine authority of the sacred priesthood, and mock at the holy sacraments, mimicking them in their secret assemblies—all the more dangerous, the holy Abbot says, because of the blameless moral lives of many of them, and their upholding their errors from the Holy Scriptures, which they know and pervert in a wonderful manner. Yet is he averse from killing them, having compassion on their lost souls, and dreading the effect of public executions in spreading their madness, and giving notoriety to their errors.

He is also very earnest against the recent slaughter of the Jews on the banks of the Rhine, which some have rashly styled a “crusade,” saying, that the true weapons wherewith to conquer them are the Word of God and prayer. Many have already been converted by these means.

Note.—Why not the same for the Turks? They are, however, without question, very wicked and obstinate infidels, and have no right to the Holy Land.

Two of the companions of Otho the Thunderbolt were very urgent to be suffered to take the cross, and return with the venerable Abbot, who seemed nowise unwilling to receive them, “deeming,” he said, “such an enterprise doubly beneficial, since their departure would be as welcome to their friends as their presence to those they went to assist.”* But I ventured strenu-

* See “St. Bernard to the Templars.”

ously to oppose their design, fearing that, to minds so recently enlightened, the distinction between spoiling the Turks for Christ's sake, and plundering the Germans for their own, might not be so clear as could be wished. The holy Bernard deigned to be guided by my remonstrances.

Note.—It is a pity that the holy Abbot should adhere to the novel rule of the Cisterians; but he is, notwithstanding, doubtless a man of God. Indeed, had it not been for our conviction of his especial sanctity, we certainly could not have received one of that rule at our Abbey.*

July 29.—SS. Peter and Paul.

I have done a deed this week, whether good or evil I shall know hereafter, but otherwise I could not do.

When I went to Magdalis's cottage this morning, I found her wringing her hands and weeping bitterly, the room unswept and in disorder, and Karl standing with folded arms before the fire, looking very sullen and determined.

"What is the matter?" I exclaimed; "what has happened?"

"Nothing!" replied Karl, gruffly, "but that

* The quarrels between rival monastic orders sometimes ran very high. The Cluniac monks refused the rites of hospitality to the Cisterians, and the compliment was returned, although the two heads of the orders seem to have been far more forbearing—the venerable Peter and St. Bernard having been, personally, cordial friends.

my mother does not want to spare me to be a soldier of the holy Cross."

"Nothing!" sobbed poor Magdalis; "will Father Bartholomew call that nothing!—for an only son to leave his widowed mother to the mercy of strangers, that he may go and be killed amongst the heathen Turks and Jews?"

I could not altogether approve of Mother Magdalis's view of the Holy Wars, but neither did I feel sure of the genuineness of my foster-brother's vocation to fight in them. He is at best but a willful lad, although sound at the core, and for some months he had been growing weary of the monotonous toil of his peasant life. Wherefore I represented to him that the call must be very strong which could make it a duty for him to desert his mother, and asked him, since the redemption of the Holy Land lay so very near his heart, when this loud call from heaven had been vouchsafed him.

He looked puzzled for an instant; then, drawing his hand impatiently through his long brown hair, he said—

"You know well I am no scholar: about calls and vocations I understand very little; but this I know—half the next village are going to Palestine, and the lord of Erbach-Erbach has promised to make me his armor-bearer if I will go. And how expect a young fellow like me to toil away his youth in earning a scanty pittance of daily bread, when he has the chance of seeing the

world, and coming back rich enough to be head peasant of the district in a few years?"

"How many came back from the last crusade?" moaned Magdalis. "Ask the old men of the village that!—and who would not rather be a serf of the good monks of Marienthal, than a retainer of the proud lords of Erbach? And Nannerl, too, how she will grieve, and poor little Gretchen!"

"Gretchen will not care," said the young man, coloring. "Gretchen's grandfather was a merchant of one of the free imperial cities, and she says she will never wed a serf of the soil."

"What does it matter what that silly child says?" said Magdalis, half petulantly; "you will be killed, and then she will be as sorry as any of us, poor vain wench!"

Karl's lip curled, but he did not look altogether displeased.

"The War of the Cross is a holy war," he said; "and if I die, mother, you will know that I am safe, and Father Rudolph, who preached the crusade on the Rhine, says one wound from the Turk is worth fifty Pater Nosters."

Magdalis was too wretched to controvert either his theology or his purpose; but as I looked at his manly form, and his bold, bright eye, I felt still more doubtful as to his heavenly vocation to the Cross, and I said, "Well, I would not interfere with a pious vow, Karl, but I came to tell you that the old Abbey huntsman died last week,

and I thought you might have filled his place, as you are a famous marksman."

Karl turned suddenly to me.

"Well, Father Bartholomew," he said, after a short pause, "I am no scholar, and, as I said, know little of calls and vocations—after all, it might be a mistake;—could you really get me appointed Abbey huntsman—and made free?"

"I might try, Karl," I said; "but far be it from me to tempt you to resist a call from heaven, or to neglect a sacred vow."

Karl rubbed his forehead and looked up and down, half puzzled and half convicted; at length he stammered—

"I am a poor unlettered man; I do not know that it was exactly a vow, Father Bartholomew; and even if it were, could you not perhaps manage that for me too?"

I could not help smiling as I shook his hand and took leave.

In a few weeks Gretchen is to be married to the Abbey huntsman. The saints intercede for me if I have done wrong! After all, Karl will be in the service of the Church.

And I sometimes wonder if the Saviour cares as much for His deserted sepulchre as so many now do.

Are not His living habitations far better?

"The poor ye have always with you."

"In that ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

And St. Paul writes to each one of the faithful: "Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost?"

Why, then, travel so far to the site of an overthrown temple and an empty tomb?

"He is not there—He is risen."

He is not there *only*, for, where two or three are in His name, *there* is He.

St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Thomas, St. Bartholomew,
and all the holy Apostles and Evangelists;
St. Stephen, St. Clement, St. Pothinus with thy
companions;

St. Irenæus with thy companions;

St. Sebastian, St. Laurence, and all the holy
Martyrs;

St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Gregory, and all
the holy Doctors;

All the holy Pontiffs,

All the holy Monks and Hermits,

All the holy Virgins and Widows,

Omnes sancti and sanctæ Dei,

Orate pro me,

if I have erred.

July 10.

On the eve of the Feast of the Transfiguration, a strange monk begged admittance into our Abbey. He bore letters of recommendation from the venerable Peter, Abbot of Clugni, and we received him gladly.

He is a noticeable man, tall, with a complexion

that tells of a southern sun; his eyes are very dark and piercing—they seem always still; and yet, whenever you look at him, they are fixed on you. His bearing is more that of a soldier than of a monk—and of a soldier more used to command than to obey; yet is he wonderfully lowly and submissive, and ready to perform the most servile offices if directed by his superiors. He calls himself Conrad. He says little, perhaps because he speaks German with a slight lisp, and with difficulty, nevertheless not as if his throat were sewn up like a Frenchman's, but with a manly force. He also talks Latin, so that I understand him easily, although brother Lupacius avers that his idiom is not that of the ancient Romans; no reproach, I trow, to a Christian man.

In no language, however, does he say much, his thoughts seeming for the most part turned inward, and not happy, although he has a singular way of seeing everything whilst apparently looking at nothing.

Most of us stand rather in awe of him, but the strange, taciturn man attaches me to him; also, he seemeth not to dislike my company.

August 13.

A company of Lombard merchants has been here to-day with silks from Greece and Asia, and other curious Eastern wares.

The Abbot bought some beautiful rare stones,

to ornament withal a copy of the missal which brother Theodore, a curious man in all arts and handicrafts, has lately illuminated.

Also some of the brotherhood purchased several ells of fine stuff for their hoods and scapularies. I marveled to see how curious they were in their choice,* running the cloth through their fingers—holding it up to the light—disposing it around them in cunning folds—and discussing its merits with the dealers and with one another, as eagerly as if it had been an article of the faith. Scarce could any lady at the court of my lord of Erbach have been more dainty. Methinks, if this had been our object, we might have found a more gallant costume.

Brother Conrad held himself apart the while, and once or twice I saw a smile pass across his face—but not of mere amusement.

The merchants spoke of a wonderfully magnificent Christian kingdom amongst the wilds of Asia. From their description, brother Lupacius, who studied at Paris, concludes it to be somewhere near the garden of Eden—but many of us think this a rash and profane speculation, deeming that the garden has been taken up into heaven.

The emperor of this country styles himself Prester, or Priest, John, although he has princes and kings amongst his servitors, himself prefer-

* See Neander's "Life of St. Bernard," p. 81, Miss Wrench's translation.

ring the title of Priest, as at once more lowly and more lofty—a singular mark of enlightenment in a barbarous man.

Note.—The merchants seem to understand rightly the controversy between us, the old Benedictines, and the Cisterrians, speaking evil of these last, as sanctimoniously austere, and ill patrons of commerce and the arts.

August 24.—St. Bartholomew. Holy Patron, pray for me!

Our bees have prospered well this year, yielding a goodly store of honey and meat.

Monday.

Brother Conrad is foot-sore and ill from his journey. It was very long, and he seems unused to foot-traveling. Nevertheless, he will not consent in anywise to relax the severity of his abstinences.

This evening, I went to his cell with a healing decoction of herbs, which hath proved of marvelous virtue amongst the peasantry. As he did not answer my signal, I gently opened the door. He was kneeling on the floor, fervently grasping an iron crucifix to his breast. As I entered, he arose, and hastily threw his mantle around his shoulders, but I could see they were bleeding from the use of the discipline. He asked, rather haughtily, what I wanted. I prayed him to let me bathe his feet. He refused my assistance

courteously, yet so that I could not press it. As I left the cell, he took my hand and pressed it to his lips, saying, "Brother, thou hast a good and innocent heart—pray for me."

I fear he has committed some great sin.

Thursday.

All the village is in uproar about the foreign monk. Yesterday, as brother Conrad was walking, he saw a stout peasant carle beating one of Manuel Reichardt's boys, for laming his mule by hard riding. Without saying a word, Conrad threw back his cowl, girded up his garments, and beat the man. At this the peasants are enraged, calling him a foreign meddler, but Nannerl takes his part, as also all the children, to whom he is ever gentle. Nannerl's boy was, however, a mischievous and idle rogue (very unlike his mother), and had no right to the mule. Moreover, such interference comporteth not with the dignity of the religious habit.

Our lord the Abbot, taking the matter into his consideration, has condemned our brother to penitence, and the seclusion of his cell. Abstinence beyond what he already practices is scarce possible.

Saturday.

Our lord the Abbot, after matins, enjoined on brother Conrad to ask forgiveness from the peasant carle.

His dark cheek flushed high: "I from a villain!" he murmured between his teeth.

"On the obedience of a monk, I command you!" said the Abbot, rather fiercely.

Conrad bowed in acquiescence, went to the village, sought out the peasant, and made the required apology in my presence.

The carle would have made him a present in acknowledgment of the condescension, but he would not accept it.

"The slave deserved the chastisement," he said to me, as we returned.

"The obedience of a monk includes submission in will as well as in act," I suggested.

"I know it," he replied; "I submit."

"The commandment of our Lord Jesus," I rejoined, "reaches the heart as well as the will; He said, 'Love your enemies.'"

He looked down, and spoke no more until we reached the convent; but in the evening, he came to my cell, and said—

"You are no hypocrite. Do you mean that it is possible, from the heart, to love those who have hated, wronged, and meanly slandered us—not only to forbear taking vengeance, but to love?"

"Jesus said of His murderers, 'Father, forgive them;' and thousands of them were forgiven, and are now amongst the blessed company of His redeemed."

"He was God," said Conrad; "I am a man and a sinner."

“Have you then, yourself, nothing that you need to be forgiven?”

He looked at me earnestly and sadly. “I understand you,” he said, bitterly; “we must forgive, that we may be forgiven. It is hard to do it, but not to do it is hell.”

“Nay,” I replied, “we must forgive, because we are forgiven. We must love, because we have been so loved.”

But he seemed to have fallen again into his self-enclosed state, and hastily taking his lamp, he left my cell.

Wednesday.

Brother Conrad seems to have been easier in mind lately, having been actively employed.

He had observed that we had to draw all our water for the household, the cattle, and the garden, from the stream at the bottom of the valley, which is nearly a quarter of a mile off. He asked why we did not dig a well. The Abbot assigned the labor, and the uncertainty of finding water, as the reason.

“If I am permitted,” he replied, “I will engage to accomplish it in a week, with one laborer.”

Most of us deemed this an idle boast, but Otho the Thunderbolt had confidence in the stranger, and freely offered to assist him.

They accordingly set about it at once. In a few days the water came gushing out of the ex-

cavation. Otho wondered at the sagacity with which he had fixed on the spot.

"I have been many years in the East, where water is scarce," he said in explanation. I suppose he was with the crusading army.

He has also shown us some new agricultural implements, used, he says, among the Provençals, and in Languedoc, a people marvelously skilled in all sorts of arts and handicrafts.

Friday.

To-day a horse was brought to the Abbey for sale. The creature was beautiful, but withal so wicked and ill-natured, that several of our best riders (and I grieve to say, there are more among us than befits a company of sober and peaceful world-renouncing men, who are skilled in the *manège* of chargers) were thrown violently to the ground.

The horse was about to be sent back, when Conrad, who had been watching us apart, offered to mount him.

First whispering in the animal's ear, he sprang on his back, and rode him round the court and whithersoever he would, guiding him like a lady's palfrey.

When he dismounted, we all crowded round him, marveling at his skill. But he said carelessly, "I learned it from the Arabs. There are many among them who ride far better;" then disengaging himself from us, he retired to his cell.

Brother Conrad puzzles us all sorely. Some of the brethren fear he may have been a follower of Mahound, for he spoke in some heathenish jargon to one of the Italian merchants, of which none of us could understand a syllable. And, as brother Lupacius saith, what could he mean by "learning from the Arabs?" how can one learn anything Christian from an Arab?

Yet I feel a strange liking for him; to me he is always gentle and friendly. Only sometimes I fear he may have mistaken his vocation. Natures energetic as his, and accustomed to action, will scarce find scope or employment in the dead calm of our life.

December

The whole Abbey has been in a tumult for some weeks. The sub-prior is dead, and we have been engaged in electing a successor.

He lay sick for many weeks, being well stricken in years. During his illness, there was much plotting and conferring in the convent; four of the elder monks gathering groups of two or three at a time around them in corners, at our hours of recreation, and talking earnestly in a low voice.

These monks were very courteous to one another; yet, if one of them saw another thus engaged in converse, he would join the group, which was sure soon afterwards to disperse.

These same monks were very tender in watching the symptoms of the sub-prior's malady.

Also, the office-bearers have been marvelously diligent in their business of late—increasing notably the while in courtesy to all.

At length the sub-prior died and was buried.

For some days, the whole brotherhood stepped more softly, and spoke with subdued voices. I mourned the old man from my heart, for to me he had been as a father, and he had many strange tales of the olden times. Yet were his last years so quiet and noiseless—his voice has so gradually become hushed among us—that it scarcely makes a silence, now that it has ceased. May he rest in peace! many masses will I offer for his soul.

We met in the chapter-house, and after solemnly chanting the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, the lots were cast.

To the surprise of us all, the lot fell on brother Conrad, but he was not to be found.

Whilst some of the younger brethren went in search of him, the rest began to whisper together. At first, the four elder monks, whom I have mentioned, seemed relieved to find that neither of the four besides themselves was chosen; but, as brother Conrad's absence was prolonged, they drew together, and conferred in angry whispers. "An intruder!"—"a foreigner!"—"a foundling of the gallows!"—"an Arabian magician!" and many other rash words, dropped from them.

The good men suffered the heat of argument to

carry them away; and, ere long, the whispered murmur rose into loud debate, and the debate into a tempest of wrathful words; and so eager and passionate was the discussion, that brother Conrad stood five minutes amongst them before they perceived him.

At length, our lord the Abbot arose, and after gesticulating some little time in vain, he succeeded in imposing silence.

Still, however, there continued a low grumble of discontent, as the echo of thunder among the hills when a storm is gone, and we wonder whether it will return.

“Brethren,” said the Abbot, “behold him whom you have chosen to succeed our venerable sub-prior. May the choice be blest!”

But many of the brethren glared angrily on brother Conrad, and the storm was beginning to rise again.

Brother Conrad stood with his arms folded on his breast, calmly awaiting a pause, with that peculiar smile on his lips which I have observed before, until the Abbot was obliged again to interpose.

“Brethren,” he said, “are we not a sacred council of priests, guided by the Spirit of the Highest? Behold the man of your choice.”

Then there ensued a sullen calm, and Conrad’s voice was heard.

“I came not hither,” he said, “holy father, to

rule monks, but to save my soul; let the holy brotherhood choose some fitter man."

We were accustomed to this formula of humility in the newly-elected; but, to our surprise, brother Conrad persisted in his refusal, and was not by any means to be moved from it.

We accordingly proceeded again to the election, and this time the choice fell on one of the four elder monks.

With this the assembly was obliged to be content. The new sub-prior has been solemnly installed, and brother Conrad is honored in the convent as a model of humility.

On the next morning, as brother Conrad and I were journeying together to administer the sacrament to a sick man, I said, "I rejoice to see that your heart is not set on seeking great things for yourself."

He laughed, and replied, "I do not understand the monks, nor they me. If I had desired the greatness of this world, I would not have sought it in an obscure monastery of the north. I have commanded thousands of soldiers, and to me it is no point of ambition to rule a few monks. I came hither to fly the world, not to seek it. I came hither to live in quiet, and to save my soul."

Brother Conrad is right, and I love him for his honest words; nevertheless, I marvel that he should speak so slightly of our venerable Abbey—chartered as it is by the Emperor, containing the sacred relics of a supreme Pontiff—

our blessed Lady herself having marked out the site in a vision, our founder being in the calendar, and our Abbot ranking next the mitred Abbots and the episcopal throne. He can scarcely be informed of this, or he would never have used words so singularly inappropriate as an "*obscure monastery*," or "*a few monks*." Not that I am proud of these privileges: no! holy Benedict knows that we are nothing but a company of poor and humble priests—the servants of the servants of God.

January 26.—St. Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr.

A post arrived to-day, with messages and letters for our lord the Abbot, and a letter, sealed with a noble escutcheon, for brother Conrad. The messenger brings sad tidings of the apostasy of some of Bishop Otho of Bamberg's new converts in Pomerania, and the sufferings of others. Hearing and reading of such things, how it shames my languid and lukewarm heart! THOU art the same to us as to them; oh make us the same to Thee!

I took the letter to brother Conrad in his cell. On receiving it his hands trembled, and his face turned livid in its paleness. When he had read it, he tore it passionately in twain, murmuring, "The curse of God!" —then suddenly checking himself, he said to me, "Leave me, brother Bartholomew, you can do me no good now." I had no choice but to leave the cell, for so stern was

his countenance, that I deemed it folly to resist his will.

January 30.

For these many days none of us have seen brother Conrad. He refuseth meat, and denieth entry to all.

February 1.—St. Ignatius, Bishop and Martyr.

To-day, I knocked at the door of brother Conrad's cell; receiving no answer, I at length ventured to enter unbidden.

He sat on his bed, with his eyes bent on the ground. His crucifix lay on his knees; his face was pale and drawn, as that of a man who had passed through some great agony of bodily pain; but it was perfectly calm, and so was his voice when he addressed me, saying—

“Wherefore do you come here? you can do me no good.”

But I seated myself beside him, and said, “Brother, I came to read you some of the words of peace, fearing that you have suffered.”

He did not reply, nor did his features relax; but he bowed his head, and receiving no further encouragement, I opened the Psalter at the 32d Psalm.

“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.”

“Do you come hither to torment me before the time?” he exclaimed, looking sternly and abruptly at me: “in my spirit there *is* guile. My transgression can never be forgiven, nor my sin covered. The words of peace are very swords to me, for I can not repent. Those who forgive not shall never be forgiven, and I can not forgive!”

I was silent, and after a few moments he proceeded:—

“Listen, if you will, to my wrong. I have told it to none beside. I had broad lands in Aragon, and castles. I loved, and believed myself beloved, and was betrothed. In an evil day, I took the Cross; she decked me with her colors when I went, and I bore them triumphantly through the thick of many battles. I returned. Came with my retainers to my father’s castle. There was feasting there: she, my bride, was there, and my younger brother, a scribe, a lawyer, a man of smooth words and a comely face, whom I had cherished as my own son, for we were orphans—she was there, *his wife*! My lands and castles were my own, and the king was my friend; but what were they or he to me? they could not restore her to me, or to the truth and beauty of soul with which I had clothed her. I left my country in disguise, and came hither a monk, resigning my titles and estates to them. They took advantage of my absence to slander me to my king; he trusted me, and revealed their

treachery. There is the letter they have sent me, thanking me for my generosity, and begging me formally to transfer all my hereditary rights—and *she has signed it*. That is all my story. I have done what I can—I have sent them what they asked for. I will not curse either of them—but God, you say, exacts more. I have tried, but I can not forgive. You can do me no good—I am lost.”

He said these words with the calm of fixed conviction, as one to whom the terrible thought was no strange or doubtful thing, but ascertained and familiar. But I could not withhold my tears.

When I could speak again composedly, I took the crucifix from his knees, and said, “Brother, whose image is this?”

“I know what you would say,” he answered; “but it is in vain. He is God. His heart was tender and compassionate; mine is hard—it has been frozen hard in its own tears. He forgave, but I hate. I sin even as I speak, and can not repent. I do not murmur against God. He is just. I am lost—and I deserve it!”

There was such intense and fixed anguish in the slow calmness with which he uttered these words, that I felt any words of mine were powerless; and kneeling down, I called, at first in silence, and then aloud, on Him who delighteth in mercy.

What I said, I do not exactly remember; I remember only that I poured out my whole heart

before God, calling on Him who is so near to the broken-hearted to have pity on my brother—to heal the heart men had broken, and to bind up its wounds. I knew and felt that the Lord was near us—as near as when the sick and fearful touched the hem of His garment, and were healed, and the guilty outcast wept at His feet, and was forgiven—and as gracious. I was sure that He heard, and sure that He would keep His promise, and give what we asked. Before I rose, Conrad had sunk on his knees beside me, and when I rose, he still remained kneeling.

I waited some time: then placing the crucifix in his hands, I said, “It was for no light sin that the Son of God left His glory, and became obedient to a death such as this: nor did He suffer such things in vain. My brother, you *are* lost; but the Lord Jesus came to seek the lost. You have mistaken the object of His coming altogether. He came not to judge, but to save. Look on Him your sins have pierced, and live.”

There was no tear in his eyes—no sign of emotion on his face; but as I left the cell, he grasped my hand, and said, in a scarcely audible voice—
“There is hope.”

February 4.

This evening, brother Conrad rejoined us at the reading of the Scriptures. We are reading through the Book of the prophet Isaiah. The chapters read to-day were from lii. to lvi.

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

“All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

And again—

“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.”

Methought the living words never brought to my heart such a warm feeling of the unmerited and unutterable love of God before; and as the lantern-bearer went his rounds, casting the light on one after another, I saw that brother Conrad's face was wet with tears, and he did not try to hide them—a strange thing for so proud a man.

February 12.—St. Eulalia, Virgin and Martyr.

I never saw a man so changed as brother Conrad. His heart seems opened; it is as if a hand which knew the secret had touched some hidden spring, and the closed vessel had sprung open in an instant. Instead of his soul being a dark thing folded up in its own gloom, it seems an open house full of peace and light, and warming

all who come near him. The old smile of contemptuous pity has given way to one of kindly interest. In place of the dead mechanical submission with which he used to obey the commands of the superiors, it seems now his joy and his "meat" to minister to all as the servant of Him who came to minister.

This evening, as we returned from a visitation in the forest, we passed Nannerl's cottage; the children (she has three now) were standing at the door waiting to catch the first glimpse of their father as he returned from his day's work at the Abbey. When he came in sight, they all ran out to meet him. The two eldest clung to his coat, the youngest tottered after them until he caught her in his arms and covered her with kisses.

"What is it," said Conrad, when we had passed, "to be able to call God Father!"

"Yes," I replied, "and heaven *home*."

God gives strength by giving peace.

To Conrad as to St. Paul the Son of God has been revealed; and the Spirit of God fills every corner of his ruined and desolate heart with the music of "Abba, Father."

February 14.

The poor people are beginning everywhere to suffer from the scarcity of the late harvest, added to the inclemency of the season. They throng our gates, imploring charity for the love of Christ.

Our lord the Abbot has emptied the Abbey granaries of all the superfluous corn; and this week we have sent brother Theodore to Bamberg, with a trusty escort, to sell some of our most richly illuminated manuscripts, with the gems wherewith they were studded. Brother Theodore almost wept to see his beloved manuscripts thus stripped; and scarce could all I said about the living epistles being even more precious than the written ones, assuage his grief. "The collections and labors of a century," he says, "scattered in a week, and betrayed perchance into the hands of the ignorant and profane, or of some rival order!"

Also we have sold some of the church plate and decorations, and sundry of the more costly vestments, to buy corn withal. Some murmur at this as a desecration of holy things, but brother Conrad saith, "It is but laying them up in a safe place, until we want them, with a sure Keeper."

He himself hath been very busy of late copying manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures, a new occupation for him until within the last few months, he being more used to handle the sword than the pen. At the first, his letters were very uncouth and unchristian-like, but he laughed at his mistakes until he conquered them, and now scarcely can brother Theodore write more rapidly or in more beautiful and legible characters. He labor-eth at it day and night, designing to sell these

copies for the famishing peasants. Also the copying of the holy words nourisheth his own soul: so that, in watering, "he is watered also himself."

It is piteous to see the poor starving people thronging the Abbey courts: mothers holding up their crying children, themselves complaining not—old men tottering from feebleness, and stout youths from famine. We are expecting supplies from Bamberg.

March.

Brother Conrad seems daily to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Scriptures. To-day he said to me, after matins—

"Once, looking on the height from which I had descended, I thought myself a man of marvelous humility, until looking up I saw how low my Saviour had to stoop to reach me. Now I can never wonder enough at my pride and His grace. Some," he added, "paint humility with downcast eyes, looking as if she thought every one was saying, 'See how humble she is!' but true humility looks freely up to heaven, knowing *what* she is, and *where*; and then forgetting herself in thinking what God is."

He is like one moving softly in the calm of a royal presence. Yet I sometimes tremble at his questions about our Holy Mother Church and her doctrines. His mind is direct and simple as a child's; and having caught the thread of a

truth, he follows it on through the Scripture, without ever heeding what nets he may tread through, or what sacred enclosures he may trample down in his path. I fear whither this may lead him.

This evening we had been sitting in the dusk, discoursing of the legends of the saints, and their appearing amongst us—of the warrior St. James—of him who was pierced through with many arrows, yet not slain—of the virgin Margaret, daisy and pearl of Paradise—of the lamb-like Agnes, her woes and her triumphs—and of many others, knights and ladies of the court of heaven.

Afterwards, when we were alone, he asked me—

“Why pray to the saints when we may speak directly to God?”

I was somewhat startled at the abruptness of the question, but I said—

“In our monastery we may all apply directly to our lord the Abbot, yet many choose rather to prefer any suit through me, knowing that the Abbot has a favor unto me.”

“That may be,” he replied; “but the Abbot is not our father, nor has he expressly commanded us to make known all our requests unto him.”

The saints, or He who sanctifieth them, preserve us from all rash speculations! nevertheless, the growth and fervor of brother Conrad often shame my cold and slothful heart. I seem not to grow, and sometimes, in looking back to the

early days of my Christian life, I am ready to cry, "Where is the blessedness I spake of then?" It seems to have faded away like a gleam at sunrise on a gray and rainy day. Can it then be with us as with the Church? Are the early days necessarily those of freshest love and purest zeal?

This would seem as if eternal life were doomed, like corruptible things, to decrepitude and decay. But no, it *is not so*. St. Paul speaks of *growth*—Conrad grows; the fault is in me—my heart is so dead, my hope at times so feeble, and my prayers so mechanical: can I have mistaken my *vocation*?

"Rex tremendæ Majestatis,
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
Salva me Fons pietatis.

"Recordare Jesu pie
Quod sum causa tuæ viæ,
Ne me perdas illa die.

"Quærens me sedisti lassus,
Redemisti, crucem passus;
Tantus labor non sit cassus."

April 13.—St. Justin the Martyr.

Our supplies of corn are arrived, and the villagers come daily to the Abbey gates for their portion. It is blessed thus to be stewards of God's storehouses, to give His people meat in due season, though it be only meat for the body.

April 23.—St. George the Martyr.

Yesterday a young Frenchman visited us from the University of Paris. We gave him a night's lodging, and he repaid us by proving various theological and other theses.

I marveled at the readiness and skill with which he tossed the ball of argument, and caught it again more deftly than the expertest *jongleur*; but brother Conrad sat silent and displeased—he affecteth not such juggler's play with truths.

Many curious questions were, however, started by the learned student—as, “Whether angels could strictly be said to fly, seeing spirits have no place, whereas flying is motion, and motion change of place.”

“Why the nose was placed above, instead of below the mouth.”

“What God would have done if Adam had not listened to the seductions of our mother Eve, and eaten of the forbidden fruit.”*

Whilst he was subtilely debating this last point, brother Conrad suddenly rose, and confronting the stranger, said—

“When a man is shipwrecked, it is no time to be discussing the conduct of the helmsman, or how the rope was manufactured which is thrown out to save him.”

The student was silenced for a moment, then he said—

* See Neander's “St. Bernard.”

“That, reverend sir, may admit of argument; permit me to state the matter syllogistically.”

“I am no scholar,” rejoined Conrad, “but this I know: when our Lord shall come again, there is one question which will place us among the saved or the lost—‘Do you know me as the Redeemer of your soul?’ And if we can say Yes, all the wisdom of angels will be opened to us afterwards in His presence.”

The Frenchman was proceeding to debate the point, when our brother laid his hand gently on his arm, and said—

“Young man, I think you are a disciple of Peter Abelard; he is a great man, but our Lord Jesus Christ is infinitely greater. Read His Word; follow Him; He can save you—Abelard can not.”

The student colored.

“Master Peter has been foully slandered,” he exclaimed; “but all admit his wisdom now. Who disputes his orthodoxy here?”

None of the brotherhood offered to enter the lists with so fierce and skilled a combatant, but Conrad said quietly—

“I slander none. I knew Abelard at Clugni; he was a man of mighty intellectual power, and has, I trow, passed through hard conflicts. To his own Master he standeth or falleth: but I believe his scholars trifle with truth as he would never have dared. There is nothing so far from the childlike heart to which God reveals His

secrets, as the childish vanity of those who play with things before which the angels veil their faces. Beware, as you value your salvation, that whilst you are making confections and dainty dishes with the Bread of Life, your own soul do not starve."

"A worthy man," whispered the student to brother Lupacius, when Conrad had left, "but lamentably behind the age."

"You were hard on the stranger," I said to brother Conrad in the evening.

"Was I?" he said. "It makes me shudder to hear sentenced malefactors, such as we are, playing with the message of pardon and deliverance the Sovereign sends them at the cost of such anguish to the Deliverer. That man can never utter truth who has never himself felt it unutterable."

June.

It is long since I have handled the pen, having been laid on my bed by severe sickness. Even now my hand trembleth, yet must I record my thanks to Him who has raised me from the gates of the grave.

"The living, the living, he shall praise thee, and declare thy truth." The famine was followed by a grievous plague. Want and hunger, and irregular feeding, have made fearful ravages amongst the peasantry. I, myself, with brother Conrad, closed the eyes of many who had been

abandoned of their kindred ; not without hope for some, that their eyes would open one day to welcome the morning of the resurrection.

Nannerl's youngest child died. How she watched and tended it, never heeding herself!

Brother Conrad sat with me day and night during my illness ; and when I began to recover, he would read to me for hours together in the Sacred Scriptures. We seemed never to weary of the blessed words. To me they were as refreshing draughts.

When I left my room for the first time, at the door I met Otho the robber. He seized my hands and pressed them to his lips. They say he had watched there morning, noon, and night, waiting to do any little service, and was not to be tempted from his post by entreaties or remonstrances.

How could I have dreamed that Thou, O Lord, wouldst have called forth such streams for me from the rock !

They led me into the convent garden. I sat for an hour or two there in the sunshine. How the birds sang that day !

July 1.

Brother Conrad has taken my place in the hospital—I his, by the bedside. He is wondrous grateful and patient.

At times, with the fierceness of the fever, his mind wanders, and then he seems to dream

himself engaged in mortal combat, either with the infidels or other fiercer foes, even the spirits which believe and hate; yet he seems scarcely ever to lose sight of Him who overcame by dying; at some moments appearing to cling to Him as a drowning man to a plank.

July 4.

To-day, as I stood in the sick-room, just as the stars were going out in the gray of the morning, he spoke to me very feebly; I went to his bedside.

“I have been lying awake long,” he said; “I have had a fearful conflict. I sank through an abyss—an abyss of darkness. My sins weighed me down and down through the bottomless depths. Beneath me was *nothing*: everything I clung to melted away and sank down with me—the earth, the stars, all men, and all they have made. Below the abyss of darkness was an abyss of fire; slow noiseless flames burned on and languished not; the smoke of their torment went up for ever and ever. I could not speak; there was no sound in the dead air, and still everything I grasped slipped from my touch, and I and they fell on together, noiselessly. I despaired utterly, yet, from the depths of my sinking heart, I grasped Jesus.”

“Then my hands clasped something which did not give way. It was the root of the tree on which He bore our sins. It went below the

depths of the fire, and was not consumed; in the universal dissolution it stood firm, for it had foundations. It rested on God, and I rested on it, and as I clung to it, one drop of the precious blood fell on me—the blood of the Son of God! The fever was cooled—the fire was quenched—in the place of hell stood the open sepulchre, and on it sat angels in white; in the place of the abyss of darkness, above me was an abyss of impenetrable light. The angels floated away into the heavens, singing, ‘He is not here; he is risen.’ I looked after them, and when they were lost in the light, other voices joined them; and in the distance they sounded low and sweet as a voice from the depths of my own soul; and they sang—

“‘There is joy in heaven;’ and, ‘He seeth of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied.’

“So, with their songs in my ears, and my head on the foot of the cross—below me the empty tomb—I fell asleep. Now, I have been lying awake long, wrapped in a sweet calm. It was a dream, brother Bartholomew; but hell, and the cross, and the resurrection, are no dreams; I am awake, but the night is around me no more; all is day—eternal, unutterably blessed day!”

I knelt beside my brother's bed, and gave thanks in silence. Then I gave him some fresh fruit; and, exhausted by the effort he had made, he slept again, and has scarce spoken since for this day.

July 8.

This morning, as I watched beside him, he said, as if to himself—

“Yes; it is true! He has gone down to the depths for us, and is set on the heights for us. He that believeth *hath everlasting LIFE!* I believe; therefore I live—live for ever a life of unspeakable, undefiled, unfading joy. ‘They shall never perish.’ ‘He that believeth not is condemned already.’ There is, then, no middle state between imperishable life and condemnation. *Here* we may pass from death unto life—*THERE*, there is a great gulf fixed which can *not* be crossed over. The fire of God’s just wrath twice seen—in *the cross*, forsaking His own Son—and *in hell*. His blood must be upon us either to cleanse or to condemn. Brother,” he said, turning to me, “was the work of expiation *finished* on the cross?”

“Unquestionably,” I replied; “having by Himself purged our sins, He is seated as one resting after a completed work, at the right hand of God.”

“Then,” he said, deliberately fixing his penetrating eyes on me, “there can be no purgatory. *The cross is the only purgatory!* For those who believe in it, no second purgatory is needed: for those who reject it, no second is possible—there remaineth no further sacrifice for sins.”

I feared to engage him in debate just then, dreading recurrence of fever, but I conjured him

to leave such dangerous speculations until his soundness of mind and body is restored.

He smiled, but said no more, desiring me to read to him from the 10th chapter of St. John. When I had closed the book, he said—

“He is the Door as well as the Shepherd of the fold: the channel, as well as the source of life. Then, it is the Lord who unites us to the Church, not the Church to the Lord. Where He is, the Church is; where He is not, there is nothing but death.”

I said, “The Church is the steward of the manifold grace of God.”

“Yes!” he replied; “and it is required of stewards that they be found faithful. If, therefore, the Church, priests, sacraments, saints, seek to come between us and our God, they at once hide the light and cease to shine. In eclipsing they are darkened.”

July 9.

To-morrow he is to leave the hospital for the first time.

July 11.

Brother Canrad's first attendance at the offering of the adorable sacrifice since his illness.

It was a high festival, being the day of the commemoration of the holy Benedict.

The silver and golden vessels of the altar were all uncovered; the church glittered and glowed

with rich decorations and stained light. The choristers sang with voices like nightingales or angels.

But in the afternoon, Conrad said—

“How much of what we call church-music must be mere noise to heavenly beings!—the melody in the heart failing.”

Again he thinks that the sacrifice of the cross being complete, it is mockery to profess to repeat it; and being divine, none but God can offer it.

Also, he deduces from the writings of St. Peter and St. Paul, that there are only two priesthoods in the Christian Church—the unchangeable priesthood of Him who hath entered into the holy place by His own blood, there to make intercession for us; and the priesthood of the whole living Church by virtue of her union with Him, set apart to offer spiritual sacrifices.

July 20.

Brother Conrad seems to become confirmed in his new convictions. He hath a perilous way of tracing things out to their consequences, which I fear may lead him to consequences I shudder to think of.

I never have felt tempted to this.

I also believe in the perfect pardon obtained by the perfect atonement; but, nevertheless, I thankfully receive the absolution of the ambassadors of heaven.

I also believe in the sufficiency of the one Mediator ; but, nevertheless, I am glad to avail myself of the intercession of the saints.

I also believe in the high priesthood of the Son of God ; yet I dare not question the existence of a Levitical order in the Church.

I conjure him not to speak openly of these things. He promises to do nothing rashly, but, saith he, "I dare not teach the smallest lie, since the truth is my life."

Also he saith, "Every truth taught me is a talent intrusted me, therewith to trade for the glory of my Lord. In hiding, I waste them."

He says he believes some may cling so close to Christ, that all their errors lie dead and nugatory outside ; but, nevertheless, he asserts that all which is not truth is falsehood, and all falsehood is pernicious—tending to lull the slumbering, and to harass the earnest ; that all which is not armor is a weight burdening us and hindering our course ; that if Jesus himself neutralizes the poison *for us*, it is still poison when we present it to others.

August 10.—St. Laurence.

Otho the robber is dead, having caught the fever from us.

"Thou receivest sinners."

August 20.

Woe is me ! to what is my brother fallen !

A few weeks since he went to visit a sick man. The man had led a very abandoned life ;

his heart seemed closed to all brother Conrad's appeals; but as he was leaving, the dying man called out to him, "Father, you are a holy man; when you come to see me again, bring me the last sacraments of the Church, and I will give you all the money I have left, to offer up masses for my soul."

Conrad was shocked at the request, and going back to the bed, he said—

"The pardons of God are free. They are to be had by those who want them for asking, but not for gold."

And he refused to receive any money to pray his soul out of purgatory, even telling him that God offered us no choice besides heaven and hell, conjuring him with tears to accept the pardon so dearly bought and so freely given.

But the man persisted, asking, with oaths, what priests were for, if not to save the souls of their flocks.

And so, unshriven and unanointed, he died.

At his death, the relations came to the Abbey and complained to our lord the Abbot of Conrad's conduct.

At first the Abbot, being a man of an easy temper (although fiery withal), would not believe the report; but on our brother being called and questioned, he deliberately and unhesitatingly confirmed the conversation in every point.

They threatened, exhorted, and disputed with him—but in vain.

The discussion seemed only to confirm brother Conrad, whilst it made our Lord the Abbot very angry, so that at last he swore, if Conrad did not abjure his errors within three days, he would excommunicate him, and hand him over to the secular arm.

He made no reply, and was sentenced to be imprisoned in his cell.

The three days elapsed swiftly.

At length, on the eve of the appointed day, I obtained leave to repair to his cell, and make one more effort to save him. But verily, when I entered therein and saw with what marvelous sweetness and composure he sat awaiting the morrow, all the skillful exhortations I had framed wellnigh died away on my lips. Yet I believe I spoke to him faithfully of the Holy Mother Church, reminding him that she who had born and nourished countless hosts of saints and martyrs was worthy of all reverence, and conjuring him not to suffer himself to be cut off from her communion; but he said with a smile—

“My brother, it is God, and not the Church, who hath begotten and nourished the saints and martyrs; ‘begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,’ and ‘nourished and cherished by the Lord Himself.’ This outward framework of ordinances and institutions is not the Church. It has cost me much to learn it; but truth is worth everything.”

Then I entreated him to remember the holy

words with which she had sustained him, and her divine offices, gently leading him from infancy to manhood. Where martyrs died he might surely be saved; in leaving her, what security could he have? "This," he replied: "'my sheep know my voice, and they follow me, and none shall pluck them from my hand.' His voice is in the Bible; anything which seeks to silence that, can not be from Him. The Church can neither give life nor take it."

I forebore to argue further, seeing that it was vain, but we knelt once more together and prayed.

Can the devil give such heavenly composure? Can any but God inspire such prayers? Can he be right?

Holy Benedict, and Bartholomew, and Mary, mother of God, forgive me, and pray for us both!

I can not hate the heretic, but a heretic myself I will never be.

* * * * *

It was midnight; the altar lamps were lighted, the solemn service commenced; the incense, the lights, the awful music—they float before me like a dream—only, in the midst, one form stands out real, as if I could touch it now—one brought there to be degraded and cursed, and yet with a countenance as calm and radiant as that of the martyr Stephen, when, looking up, he saw the

glory of God, and Jesus at the right hand of God.

The service ceased; the lights were extinguished one by one, and in the silence of the awe-stricken assembly, and through the arches of the lofty roof, echoed only from time to time the terrific words, "Anathema! anathema! anathema!"

And the excommunicated heretic was led back to his cell.

My brother—my brother Conrad—thou who wast my companion, mine equal, and mine own familiar friend; we took sweet counsel together, and walked in the house of God as friends!

What if, whilst they were pealing anathemas, the Lord Jesus was whispering, "Come, thou blessed of my Father!" What if—

[Here occur an erasure and a blank in the manuscript.]

August 15.

Brother Conrad's cell was this morning found empty

We have searched for him everywhere, but in vain; we can discover no traces of him.

In my heart I can not help half rejoicing; and our lord the Abbot is, I trow, not sorry; yet to have lost thee, my brother, my son!

Fragments of Letters found amongst the Secret Papers of the Abbey of Marienthal, at its destruction, during the Thirty Years' War. [Supposed never to have reached their destination.]

FRAGMENT OF LETTER THE FIRST.

In the name of Him who has called us from idols to serve Him, the living and true God—and to wait for His Son from heaven—grace and peace!

I, Conrad, write these words unto thee, Bartholomew, my friend, and my brother, knowing that thou wilt often have wondered at my sudden disappearing—to tell thee of my safety, and of the love and gratitude with which I constantly remember thee; giving thanks for thee in all my prayers.

I send this packet to the house of our friend Magdalis, there to be left for thee by a trusty hand. If thou desirest to hold further communication with me, outcast as I am, the same hand will be ready to receive thy missive; if not, these lines can not endanger thee.

I made my escape by wrenching out the bars of my prison windows. I believe I do not dread death, having met it often, and having now learned to see through it—yet life is precious when we can lay it out for our Saviour; and I was glad to deliver the Abbot from blood-guiltiness, and thy tender heart from much sorrow.

I reached the top of the hill which bounds our valley, at the morning twilight. The village lay dim in the mist, the Abbey tower rose up through it, and the voice of the river came to me like the farewell of a friend; of thee I could take none! My heart misgave me: I was about to cut the last cable which bound me to the shore of happy days—the birthplace of a new life; but I turned away. The boat was launched—the little creek, apart from the tides and currents of the main, was left behind, and with it my regrets.

There are but two calms, the calm of the grave and of heaven—the rest of death and of perfected life. To rest before the voyage is over is to miss the haven.

I passed through valley after valley, keeping on the skirts of the forest: and at evening, when the long shadows crept down over the meadows, and the herds of goats crept on before them in the sunshine, I stole out to beg a morsel of bread of the goatherd, and to drink of the stream. With one of these poor herdsmen I changed clothes, and in this disguise entered Heidelberg.

It was a solemn joy to lie awake at night, with nothing between me and the infinite starry heavens—nothing between my soul and God.

It was a feast to awake in the morning, in the free forest, with the open sky above me—to feel that I might go whithersoever I would; and yet to know that all my goings had a purpose—the purpose of Him who guideth us with His eye.

I felt I had issued from the dull and smoky lamplight into the daylight; from a narrow monk's world into the unbounded God's world: and the world was a household, and I His child!

I prayed earnestly, that if there were yet any in the world who lived simply by the eternal life He had manifested, and the rule He had given, I might find them—that we might not be traveling the same road in the same service, and yet walk as strangers to one another.

For many weeks it seemed as if I were not heard.

The life of the cities was as a strange discord to my ears; they seemed like cities of Cain—music was there, and workers with all manner of tools, in all manner of metals; but God was not there. All the noise was but to drown the voice of the River of Life, which, meanwhile, flowed on beside them, bearing them swiftly to eternity.

Priests were there, and cathedrals, and they sang truths which might have saved the souls of all who heard them; but they sang them in a language the people could not understand. Was not this also mere din to drown eternal voices?

They made the church windows opaque at noon, with beautiful colors, that men might see the altar tapers.

And there were processions, and preachers, preaching pilgrimages to Jerusalem, and recounting the merits of sacred images, and dead bones; but of the journey each man is going, whether he

will or no—of the living God, His love, and His light—of His defaced image in man, and its restoration through the Second Man, the Lord from heaven—of the mystery, now a mystery no more, which changes us from homeless and aimless *vagabonds* into *pilgrims* journeying home, with hands and hearts full of blessings—I heard in the high places not a word.

Oh, if men did but know what Voice they are rejecting—what are its words, and its tones!

Some, indeed, were toiling earnestly to reach the heavens, making themselves wretched to please God, as if He had never given His Son to make them happy—toiling, as if the Light of the heaven of heavens had never come down to men, saying, “Come (not to heaven—*that* you can not) but to *Me*: I am the Resurrection and the Life; in Me you shall live and rise.”

It was all the old heathendom—with a Christian name.

And again I prayed earnestly, that, if any still adhered to the simplicity of the faith once delivered to the saints, I might discover them. So I journeyed on, speaking from time to time, to those I met, of the blessed message, if by any means its music might strike on a string that could echo it. Some were careless, and some mocked, and some received the good tidings eagerly, yet as a new thing. None seemed to recognize in them a familiar voice.

At length, one day, when I was about three

leagues from one of the free cities, I fell in with a pedlar, walking beside his mule. He did not look like a son of the north ; there was something in the grave cheerfulness of his countenance and bearing which interested me, and I accosted him.

He displayed to me his wares ; some few of them were costly silks and stones, for the castle, but the greater part were woollen and cheap ornaments, for the peasantry.

Then he asked me my calling, for by this time I had changed my herdsman's dress for that of a burgher, earning the price by copying manuscripts.

"I, too, am a merchant," I replied ; "but all my property is invested in one jewel. Your goods perish in the using, mine multiply."

He looked at me with peculiar earnestness. "Incorruptible things are not bought and sold," he said, significantly.

"No!" I rejoined : "Freely ye have received, freely give."

He paused, and fixing his eyes on me with a gaze of eager inquiry, he said in Provençal French—

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake."

My father's castle was near the Pyrenees, and I knew the Provençal dialect well, and replied by continuing the quotation—

“Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy ; for behold your reward is great in heaven ; for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.”

He held out his hand, and we embraced each other as brethren. When HE shall come with clouds, there will be many rapturous recognitions ; but few will surpass the pure joy of that day to me.

“I thought,” he observed, “when first you spoke to me, that you were one of us—and yet I scarcely knew why.”

“Are there, then, many of you ?” I asked, eagerly.

For a moment he glanced at me half suspiciously.

“You must know as well as I do,” he replied, laconically : “the birds of the air have their nests !”

Then I related to him my history, at least as much as was needful, and when I had finished, he grasped my hand again, more cordially than before, saying—

“Blessed are those who have never been within the walls of Babylon !—more blessed they who have burst her bonds and come out of her !” *

And he briefly sketched to me the story of his own life.

His name was Peter Waldo ; his native place

* It is not to be wondered at, if the Vaudois, and other Christian sects of the Middle Ages, like the early Reformers, concluded the form of Antichristian power predominant in their days to have been the final one. They are constantly spoken of as having done so.

Lyons. The sudden death of a friend, at a feast, had first turned his heart to God and His Word. In reading, like myself, he became convinced that the Church of the Pope was not a divine institution—not the true Church, but the dead image of a church, moved not by the breath of life, but by machinery. Because he believed, he spoke, and then he found that many had believed and spoken the same things before. It had not been left for him to disinter the pearl—thousands possessed it already. The truth, in making him free, had not isolated him, but had, for the first time, brought him into a brotherhood of Christian people. Henceforth, having received the promise of an eternal inheritance, he joyfully confessed himself a stranger on the earth, living not to himself but to Him who died for us. He caused two translations of the Bible to be made into the vulgar dialects of France and Piedmont, spending his whole wealth in multiplying copies of these, and in assisting the poor of the flock. The priests and magistrates cast him out of Lyons, and now they persecute him from city to city; but everywhere he scatters precious seed, selling perishable goods, that he may be enabled freely to give the imperishable; preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and gathering together the children of God that are scattered abroad.*

The multitudes which follow this way in all

* For this account of Waldo and the Christian sects of the Middle Ages, see Mosheim, Milner, Bost's *History de l'Eglise des Freres*, &c.

places, but more especially in Bohemia, the south of France, and amongst the Alps of northern Italy, are incredible—but I withhold details, from reasons which thou mayest well surmise.

There are also some wild and fanatical people, led away by their own fleshly minds, or by false teachers, who suffer themselves to be misled by an unchastened zeal, to resist the authorities and pull down the churches; and these the persecutors take pains to confound with the simple Christians, massing them all together as Manichean heretics: but they are no more allied than art thou, my brother, to those that burn them.

Before I close, I will give thee a brief account of their manner of assembling and worshiping, and my admission amongst them, refraining from indicating the place otherwise than as a city in Swabia.

It was at the house of a poor weaver. Peter Waldo led me to the door at the dusk of the evening. We were admitted in silence, and the door barred after us. Then passing singly through a dark, narrow passage, the master of the house pressed the floor at the end of it with his foot, and immediately a trap-door sprang open, revealing a stone staircase. We descended into a low damp cellar, where twenty or thirty people, men and women, were already gathered around one whom they seemed to recognize as their teacher and president. He approached us, and embracing my companion, welcomed me amongst

them. When it was stated that I wished to join them, he said—

“Then you have learned the meaning of the peace of God?—for in the world we have nothing to offer you but tribulation.”

“I have,” I replied; “to me all things are dross compared with the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.”

“It is well, my brother,” he said; “for if we be dead, we believe that we also live with Him—if we *suffer*, we shall also *reign* with Him. The kingdom of God shall yet be set on high amongst men, and the high places of the proud shall be cast down. For the day of the Lord shall be to us a day of redemption.”

Then the whole assembly joined in a circle round me,* whilst I knelt before the president, and he laid the book of the Gospels on my head, repeating, in a low, impressive voice, the Lord’s Prayer, and the first verses of the Gospel of St. John.

“Blessed,” he said, in addition, to me, “art thou! for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but our Father which is in heaven.”

And as I rose, the brethren greeted me with the holy kiss of brotherhood.

I thought, brother Bartholomew, of another midnight service—of the extinguished lights, the degradation and the curses—and I felt that even here I had been repaid an hundredfold.

* This account of the form of admission is historical.

“For I am persuaded,” as thou knowest, “that none of these things can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

The president then read some chapters from the Bible; and after a short explanation and a prayer—in which they prayed also for the persecutors, and for all in authority—and the singing of a hymn, we separated, drawn close to one another, and to our Lord, by the Spirit of adoption, and the presence of Him whom no splendid offerings nor gorgeous ceremonial can charm amongst us, but who is ever with the two or three gathered in His name.

Every one who attended that meeting was there on pain of death if discovered, so that no mere “smooth words” would have been sufficient to sustain us. The Word was preached with manifestation of the Spirit and power—for, brother Bartholomew, it is a certain truth that the Spirit of God is sent forth from on high, and abideth perpetually in the living temple of the living God, as with every quickened soul.

The Church is *not* orphaned.

There is a Vicar of Christ on earth, and an Infallible Teacher, *the other Comforter*.

But it is not the Pope.

FRAGMENT OF LETTER THE SECOND.

Not receiving any answer from thee, I yet venture to write thee again, believing that thy

letter may have miscarried, and that mine can bring thee into no trouble.

I have traveled through many places since last I wrote thee, and everywhere found fragments of this blessed brotherhood, bound together by no secret vows or concerted signals, distinguished by no peculiar garb, yet fitting together as exactly as the fragments of a torn letter ; recognizing one another as the children of one family by the mysterious tie of *kindred*—loving one another with the natural affection of new-created hearts.

I have found them among the industrious craftsmen of the trading cities ; in Languedoc, amongst the noble and learned of the land, but chiefly amongst the recesses of the mountains—God's citadels of old for His oppressed people. Especially amongst the Alps of northern Italy, on the old Roman highroad from Italy to Gaul, they are gathered in great numbers. Elsewhere, they meet and part in secret, or are scattered in families, or one by one ; but there they are gathered together in villages, and meet, in the summer, in the open air, pealing their thanksgivings, as loud as they will, to heaven.

There are no churches so grand as theirs, brother Bartholomew—cathedrals of God's own building : gigantic rocks, mountains clothed like saints in white, girding them around : for their organ and instruments of music, the voices of many waters ; for their sacrifices, the offering of redeemed and thankful hearts.

An "old, bad race of men," their enemies call them; and some of themselves say, that the Apostle Paul himself first planted their Church, and that it has been watered by the constant influx of Christian exiles, persecuted first by Imperial, and since by Ecclesiastical Rome, men who counted the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. There is an apostolic succession, my brother, but it is not continued by the laying on of men's hands.

They speak much and reverently of one Claude, Bishop of Turin, who died about three hundred years ago, as a pillar of their Church. They are a brave and industrious people, hardened by toil and danger—for though some of their valleys are fertile, it tasks their strength to the utmost to eke out a subsistence from their mountain fields and pastures; and though, as yet, no persecution has wasted their valleys, they live in constant perils, and, as it were, with their lives in their hands—or rather, in God's hands.

In winter, many of the men will travel fifteen or twenty miles on the Sunday, swimming through rivers, and scaling mountains, to hear the Word of God, and meet their brethren and pastors; and this, not because they deem such meetings necessary to save their souls, but because of the joy it gives, and the burning of the heart, when a few disciples meet together in the name of Jesus—and He in the midst. Many noblemen and women of rank join them; some relinquishing

wealth, and country, and kindred, to serve their God in peace; and others residing in the castles which crown the heights of their valleys. There is a religious order—God's clergy, the lot of His inheritance—set apart from the world, not by distinctive vows or habit, but simply by holding forth the truth which the world hates, and living the life of holiness which the world despises—separated from the wanderers by going straight forward—marked out from the darkness by shining—cast out by men, and set on high by God.

There is a holy war, but its weapons are not carnal; and a taking of the cross, but it is not a sign of glory amongst men.

I am living now with Henri, a poor weaver of Lyons, the native city of my friend; Peter Waldo. Indeed, so many of the simple Christians here follow this craft, that they are commonly called the *tisserands*, or poor men of Lyons. But long, I believe, I shall not be able to remain here, the Abbot Bernard, of Clairvaux, having excited the city, of late, against us. I remember thy speaking of him as a Christian man—alas! how many, even of such, know not what they do!

Our life is very quiet and simple. I maintain myself, and assist the family of my host, by copying and translating manuscripts of the Scriptures: thus also sowing, whilst I reap. At leisure hours, I take rounds amongst the neighboring villages and towns, sometimes with a pedlar's wares, sometimes without. The common people for the

most part hear us gladly, and not a few believe. Of these, some remain attached outwardly to the old ecclesiastical system, and some openly forsake it; this we leave to every man's conscience, our chief aim being to unite souls to Christ, and then to leave them with Him.

We have had trouble in our family lately, Henri having been laid on his pallet by fever and prostration of strength for many weeks.

His lying there, so uncomplaining, often even triumphing amidst his pain, seems to hallow the cottage into a temple for all of us. As I sit at my desk in the other corner of the room, I hear him repeating whole psalms and books of the Bible to himself—for thus it is our wont to make up for the scarcity of the copies of the Sacred Scriptures.

At times, he calls us all to praise the Lord with him; and then, the children joining us, we sing a hymn around his bed.

Before meals, it is customary with us either to kneel in silence for the space of twenty or thirty Pater Nosters, giving thanks in the depths of our hearts, or our brother Henri will offer up some simple grace, such as—"Thou who didst feed the five thousand, feed us"—"Thou who givest us this bodily nourishment, deign also to feed our souls."

Henri's poor wife is generally almost as patient as he is, although it is so much sadder to see those we love languish and suffer, than to suffer

ourselves. But enduring as she usually is, the other day her faith seemed to fail;—her husband's recovery so long hoped for and so long deferred, and my manuscripts having failed to sell; one little sickly child crying fretfully on her knee—the others clinging, hungry and half-clad, around her: she hid her face, and sobbed aloud.

“O Henri!” she murmured, “what have we done, that our prayers can not reach the Lord?”

He took her hands in his, and said, “Alette, they have reached Him. He is only keeping back the help until the best moment comes.”

“Our need can scarcely be sorer, Henri!” she said. “Can He love us, and know it all, and not help?”

“He is helping us, Alette; He is teaching us now one of His best lessons—the lesson all have had to learn in turn. He is teaching us to trust and *wait*. He is watching us, to see how we are learning it. Let us look up to Him, Alette, that we may hear His voice in the storm. Let us ask Him to bless us in the trial, and I am sure He will bless us after it.”

And we knelt together, and prayed, and were heard.

Ah! brother Bartholomew, there is no discipline like God's. *We* seek to discipline the heart by hardening it—*He* by melting it. And there is no comfort like God's. Our medicines weaken the constitution in relieving the disease; His strengthen the heart, while they heal the wound.

It is a grievous mistake to abstract ourselves from all the bracing air of everyday life, and the softening training of home, to the mechanical routine, and the dull, close atmosphere of a convent—to substitute our dead machinery of rules and abstinences for the living school of God.

It is a blessed thing to be *immediately* under the guidance of His hand, cost what it may.

I have taken my revenge on my younger brother, and on her. I have left them a New Testament, copied by my own hand, with the promise that they will read it.

LETTER THE THIRD—THE PRISON AT COLOGNE.

The Abbot Bernard has succeeded in scattering our flock at Lyons, aided by the excesses which some, in their untempered zeal, committed. Some of us have fled to the Alps, some to Hungary, Bohemia, Austria, and Swabia. I myself went northward once more; but they have captured me at last, with many others. This must be my last farewell to thee, my brother, for tomorrow we die!

This evening, we made of the portion of bread and water which they gave us a holy supper, trusting that He whose word made the water wine would not regard the imperfectness of the symbol. His presence made the prison fare a heavenly feast.

It was the last meal we shall eat on earth; it

seemed more like the first in heaven. To-day we have once more shown forth His death; to-morrow, we shall be with Him for ever, and then the long to-morrow of the day of the resurrection! For to-morrow we are to die at the stake!

This has the Abbot Bernard effected (not that I believe he himself wished to compass our death). If we meet one another, by and by, redeemed and cleansed by the same precious blood, how he will wonder at his own work!

But, for us, how is it possible to resent, when so soon we shall stand before Him with whom we have none of us anything to plead but *Himself!*

“Thou hast redeemed us by thine own blood.”

We have a sure anchor, reaching to that within the veil, even Christ *in us*, and “*in heaven*”—“the hope of glory.”

The last storm is coming on me—the vessel tosses—the flesh trembles; but, my brother, *the Anchor is firm!*

[For many years a blank occurs in brother Bartholomew's chronicle; then it recommences in a feeble and tremulous hand, and after noting one day, closes abruptly.]

Marienthal, November 1.—All Saints.

It is long since I have written anything.

Things have changed since brother Conrad left. The whole convent seems to look suspiciously on me, as his friend, and perhaps the accomplice of his flight. In clearing myself from this latter imputation, I have sometimes been led to say more than I meant against him, and afterwards my heart has reproached me bitterly. He was ever with me, as a son with his father; and sometimes I tremble, thinking that I misled him, and that I myself have been rash and presumptuous in my belief, taking too much, and too boldly, from the Bible, and looking with too little reverence to the fathers and rulers of the Church.

And then the seducing thought comes—"What, after all, if he be right and thou wrong?" And in the tumult and confusion of the many voices in my old brain, I can not always tell which are the devils and which the angels.

Mother Magdalis died a few weeks after brother Conrad disappeared, and a stranger, whom I mislike and mistrust, occupies her cottage. It is singular I should never have heard from brother Conrad; sometimes I think he may have written, and his letters miscarried, or *been withheld*, for why else do they watch me so suspiciously, and never suffer me to visit and preach to the poor peasants around, as I used to do?

Once, Nannerl told me (she always loved him since he rescued her boy), that amongst other

heretics, Cathari, Pauliciens, Vaudois, and Picards, whom they burnt at Cologne, a few years since, was one of a lofty and commanding presence, said to be a Spanish nobleman—that he touched the people so by his calm and heavenly words, that many wept; and then he prayed them not to weep for him, for he was only going home by a rough way, but for themselves, that Jesus might have pity on them, and forgive them their sins. It might have been him. It may be only Nannerl's fancy. It was certainly like him. However it be, God rest his soul! and yet, why do I pray thus? Surely, if he died so, he must have been at rest these many years. Yet the decrees of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, and the Vicar of Christ on earth! God help me! I am a poor old man, and my brain is sorely confused at times. Many of the monks point pityingly at me, as at one half-crazed; but I am not that—only tried, and very tired.

Also, the new Abbot is a jovial man, who loveth hunting, and wine, and pleasure, so that the convent echoeth oftener with the voice of mirth than with that of prayer; and for such things my old ears are out of tune.

My flesh faileth—my heart faileth; I am very lonely and desolate; I seem to be as a wrecked vessel, rotting, useless, on the shore. And yet, at times, I have gleams of a better hope. Have I not clung to the cross of my

Lord ? and is He not living—and His promise very sure ?

O blessed Lord Jesus, I am a weary old man, sorely tired with this burden of life ; wilt Thou not soon say, “ Come to Me ? ” for Thou knowest I need rest.

SKETCHES
OF THE
UNITED BRETHREN OF BOHEMIA
AND MORAVIA.

SKETCHES OF THE
UNITED BRETHREN OF BOHEMIA AND
MORAVIA.

PART I.

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

I.

JOHN HUSS had been dead for eight years; and during the greater part of that time Bohemia had been blazing with the fire kindled at his stake. The words he had spoken under the roof had indeed, as he foretold, been pealed forth from the house-top, though not in the sense or with the effect he could have wished.

The eternal truths he taught had doubtless been working their way, like most heavenly agencies, in silence, purifying the hearts which received them, to see further than their teacher; but of these, historians have, in general, spoken

only parenthetically, like indiscriminating almsgivers, bestowing the largest share of their attention on the most clamorous. Of the true successors of Huss, preacher of the gospel in Bethlehem Chapel, we know very little; whilst of Ziska and his Taborites—their intrepidity and ferocity, their victories and slaughters, their violent dissolution of five hundred convents, and their torturing a poor priest to death for denying transubstantiation—we hear far more than we could wish.

In the spring of the year 1423, the Hussite army was encamped before Prague, to chastise an attempt of the citizens to elect a king.

“Twice,” said Ziska, “have I saved Prague from the Emperor—now I come to destroy it!”

At first the soldiers murmured. The old royal city, enthroned on its twin hills, the crown of Bohemian nationality, the shrine of Calixtine faith, had a sacredness in their eyes. Was it not the holy city of Huss? Had not they themselves defended it with their life-blood?

But loyalty to the blind old chief who had led them through so many perils to so many victories, whose blindness had on them the double claim of suffering, and the transcendent energy which vanquished it—the habit of obedience, and the enthusiasm of personal devotion to their general, overcame the spell of association; they invested Prague, and prepared for the assault.

For a brief space, the then contending parties

—Calixtines, Taborites, and Roman Catholics—whose strife had been deluging the city with blood, were frightened into agreement by the presence of one stronger than they.

The gates were thrown open, and a peaceful procession issued slowly from them.

At its head was John Rockyzan, the cathedral preacher, and virtual leader of the Calixtine or “Moderate” party.

He came to intercede for Prague. He pleaded the services Ziska himself had rendered her, and the love he had borne her. His eloquent voice on Ziska’s heart prevailed. The city was spared; and, as in the days of the old Hebrew combatants, whose wars the Hussites imagined themselves commissioned to imitate, a pile of stones was reared on the camp, as a memorial of the covenant; whoever first broke the covenant being doomed to be crushed beneath the memorial. But the election of a king was prudently waived, and Ziska, with his troops, made a triumphant entry into Prague.

II.

ANOTHER thirty years had elapsed. Ziska, his successor Prosopius, the scourge of Saxony, and their army of Taborites, had passed out of hearing. That mighty creation of human will and force had been crushed and utterly dissolved; but the truth, and the hearts it had regenerated, remained, stronger than all storms. All that was combustible had blazed and been consumed; what was not combustible "burned, and was consumed not"—the starlight outliving the fireworks, to glorify God by its quiet shining.

From the ruins of the armies of Tabor had arisen the Church of the United Brethren.

One winter's day, in the year 1456, two foot-travelers were ascending one of the lower hills of the northern mountain-range of Bohemia. They walked fast, for the air was buoyant and frosty, and they were conversing eagerly; their steps keeping pace with their words. Both were clad in the clerical garb; one in the monastic habit, the other in that of a secular priest. They were uncle and nephew; and there was in them that mixture of resemblance and contrast which so often causes us to make involuntary com-

parisons between members of the same family. Neither was young, and there was little apparent difference in their ages. Both were genuine Sclavonians ; both were tall and dark, with muscular limbs, and the firm tread of mountaineers ; both had straight features and broad, massive foreheads. But in the expression, in all which thought and life stamp upon the features, there was a striking contrast. On the brow of the monk time had ploughed long furrows, but from beneath, the large eyes looked forth serene and trustful as those of a thoughtful child ; but from amidst the countless petty and anxious lines which wrinkled the face of the priest, gleamed a pair of eyes restless and distrustful as those of some small animal perpetually on the watch against attacks it had no strength to resist. The soul of the one was as a harvestfield on which time had drawn broad furrows, the depositories of precious seed ; whilst that of the other was as a highway cut up and kept barren by the daily trampling of a thousand cares.

The uncle was John Rockyzan, he whose eloquent intercession had saved Prague thirty years before, now acknowledged chief of the Calixtines, and Archbishop of Prague, by the choice of the States, though unconfirmed by the Pope. The nephew was Gregory, of the Abbey of Rascherz, leader and provisional Elder of the United Brethren of Bohemia : although, had you addressed him by that title, he would probably

not have recognized himself; for if he led the infant Church, it was by no official staff, but simply because he pointed out to her the straight path, and she desired to walk in it.

“The Brethren are unreasonable with me,” said Rockyzan, impatiently, in answer to a remark of Gregory’s. “I am, after all, their best friend; but because I work by a slow and safe process to effect their object, like impatient children, they are always fretting and teasing me. Has any man denounced more boldly than I have the corruptions of the Roman Church? Have I not declared her to be the Western Babylon, and the Pope the enemy who sowed the tares among the wheat? Have I not said publicly, in the hearing of priests and courtiers, that we Calixtines do not go far enough, cleansing only the outside of the cup? And even in that for which you most bitterly reproach me, the compact which I negotiated between the Calixtines and Rome, have I not most effectually served your cause?—for has not the civil war which ensued, disastrous as it was, been the means of sifting from amongst you the turbulent men who would have renewed the barbarities of Ziska, of the chalice, and the Taborites, and thus left you, in the midst of defeat, really strengthened, because purified?”

“It is true,” replied Gregory, gently; “the hand of the great Husbandman has turned the sword into a pruninghook.”

“And who,” pursued Rockyzan, “has toiled more than I for the triumph of the gospel? When I found that the Pope was only trifling with us in his pretended compact, refusing to confirm me in the arch-episcopate, did I not labor, and scheme, and negotiate for years, to re-knit the old ties which once bound our Bohemian Church to that of the Greek empire? And I should have succeeded, if the Turks had not taken Constantinople whilst the negotiations were pending;—was that the fault of my double-mindedness, as they call it?”

“It was proof that our strength lies elsewhere than in political machinations,” remarked Gregory. “You have indeed schemed and toiled enough: all that I desire for you now is, that you should cast from you all those subtle webs of policy, and go forth in the strength of dependent loyalty.”

“It is well,” resumed Rockyzan, “for men like you to speak thus; your path is straight, and you may thank God for it. You have none but yourselves to consider; I have all Bohemia in my heart. The peasant may go to his work singing under his load, but he who is gifted with the power, or set in the place of the ruler, must not shrink from burdens though he sink beneath them.”

“My kinsmen,” interposed Gregory, “you mistake your calling. Christ rules His Church, not you; you are the minister, not the master; as

servants, we have no course but to do His bidding, leaving the responsibility and the result with Him. We do not uphold the truth; it upholds us."

Rockyzan was silent for a few moments before he rejoined:—

"Had I done as you say, declared myself openly one of you, what voice would have filled the cathedral of Prague with gospels and denunciations? Who would have fed the deserted flock? Who would have pleaded for you with our noble sovereign, George Podiebrad, and obtained the district of Litiz as a Goshen for you, as I have done?"

"Is not the living God on our side?" said Gregory. "If He is *not*, let our cause perish; if He *is*, who can hinder it?"

"You are so one-sided with your solitary monastic habits," replied Rockyzan; "St. Paul was not above that tact and management, that politic accommodation, which you abhor; was he not all things to all men, if by any means he might gain some? I would gain all Bohemia for the gospel."

"That was precisely what St. Paul gained by his distinct and decided position," Gregory quietly remarked; "those who do not compromise can afford to conciliate."

"But what would you have me do?" demanded Rockyzan, impatiently, after a few moments' hesitation.

“What your conscience dictates,” said Gregory, looking steadily in his face ; then laying his hand on Rockyzan’s arm, he continued, with appealing earnestness—“John Rockyzan, we know one another well ; you have power, but you have not peace ; I want you to sacrifice much, that you may gain all. You see before you honor, power, the favor of your king—a position from which you might rule your country ; but they lie one step out of your path. You intend to turn aside to gather them, and then to return and use them for your Master. You are mistaken. Talents gained in disobedience to Him can hardly be used in obedience ; there is a tendency in motion in any direction to perpetuate itself ; you will either toil on with your burden of earth until, weary and dispirited, you are compelled to cast it from you, and return, after the loss of precious years, to the point from which you started ; or you will not return ; you will never return ; you will labor with your restless heart and your burden of cares, and the end of all your travail will be to be *lost*. O my kinsman, bear with me, and listen to my words : you are come to a cross-road in your life ; you know the way ; walk in it. ‘If any man serve me, let him follow me.’ There is no serving Christ but in following Him with a single heart.”

Again Rockyzan asked, “What would you have me do ?”

“Ask your God that question,” replied Gre-

gory, with increasing earnestness. "He will show you—not, indeed, the whole scheme of your life—but *the next step*; if any man *will* do His will, he shall know of the doctrine. I can only tell you what I will do. We believe that the system of the Church of Rome keeps men afar off from God, instead of bringing them nigh to Him; tossing the hearts of the faithful with doubts, and lulling the consciences of the careless with dreams. We believe that she has hidden the cross on which our sins were blotted out, and closed the sepulchre which our risen Lord opened for us, by the dead doctrines and hollow ceremonies which she has built over them; her refusal of the sacramental cup to the laity being but a type of the cup of salvation which she withholds from them. With her false doctrines and ceremonies we have nothing to do; but the cross, the riven tomb, and the free cup of life, are our all. She conceals and withholds them, but God has revealed and freely given them to us; therefore we must offer them freely to one another. This is the sole object of our little community at Litiz. For some time, as you know, we have accepted teachers from the Calixtines; but, in spite of our earnest remonstrances, they send us men who only pull down what we seek to build up. We have, therefore, no resource but to recognize those amongst us whom God has endowed with gifts of governing and teaching, and to trust Him for the result. Our high priest, our master, our bishop, our chief

pastor, is none else than the living Son of God ; our canons, His Word ; our guide and counselor, the Eternal Spirit, whom He has sent forth to abide in His Church, and build it up. Our prayer for our Church is, that if she ceases to minister to the world as a living body, she may never pollute it as a corpse ; that if she ceases to *live*, she may cease to *be*. We are now about to enter on the serious work of seeking and appointing our pastors ; if you like to join us, you can."

All this while they had been toiling up steep after steep, until at length they reached the height of the Donnersberg, the highest of the group of volcanic mountains, which they say once arose as islands out of the lake of Bohemia, and through which the Elbe has cut itself a stormy passage.

Around them lay mountains, upheaved, wave on wave, by the tossings of a fiery sea, girding in their fatherland on all sides, and guarding it, the fruit of such convulsions now reposing in calm strength beneath the heavens. Snow covered the heights, glowing in the warm light of the low sun. Over the sunny upland pastures the white frost was steaming up in soft transparent clouds ; from the dim white fog below arose hills of dark pine woods, and red masses of leafless oaks.

Beyond spread the broad plain, teeming with life ; valleys nestling in the heart of the lower hills ; spires glittering through the thin mist ; rivers linking together the cities with silver chains : and over all floated the still, clear sunlight. They

paused and looked, and listened to the silence. At length Rockyzan exclaimed—

“See how our country lies before us, guarded by her mountain walls from all the world without, linked together within by life-giving waters! My hand shall never be the one to break her sacred unity! Let us have a Bohemian Church, or none!”

But Gregory replied, sadly—

“My kinsman, there is another mountain, from whose holy calm God looks down on the whole earth, and throughout it the Father’s eye watches our scattered family, unknown to men, yet the only thing amongst men on which the heart of God can rest. Before Him that scattered family is *one*; the living stream which unites them is the truth. There is no unity in God’s sight, no unity which will stand the test of fire, but unity in the truth. All other unions are mere congealings, freezings together, of heterogeneous elements, which the day will dissolve. In forming any spiritual confederation on any but God’s principle, you are marring God’s unity, uniting what He has sundered, and sundering what He has joined together. The only schism in His sight is, I believe, to make anything but Jesus the centre and the bond of union—to reject those whom He receives, and to receive those whom He rejects. From this may He preserve us!”

But Rockyzan’s eyes were riveted on the fair scene before him. He “lifted up his eyes, and

beheld all the plain, that it was well watered everywhere, as the garden of the Lord, as the land of Egypt; and he chose him all the plain." He also, like One we know, was taken up to the top of a high mountain, and shown a kingdom and its glory. But, unlike Him, he did not repel the tempter with lowly dependence on Divine words. The thousand dewdrops in his eyes outshone the one sun, and he said—

"I can not join you yet: Bohemia needs me. I must be Archbishop of Prague, and from my throne on the mountains in the centre of my country, I will send forth messengers of the gospel to every corner of the land; and then, when all Bohemia is penetrated with the truth, as one man we will arise, and throw off the yoke of Rome! The eye of the politician sees further than that of common men. He who guides men must move slowly." And taking a hurried leave of Gregory, Rockyzan went back to Prague. Gregory visited his brethren among the mountains, and then returned to Litiz. Their paths parted, only crossing once afterwards. The eye of the politician saw far, but the eye of the Christian saw further, for it saw through the clouds to the heavens. Few men consciously choose the service of Mammon; none unconsciously serve God.

III.

THINGS followed the course foretold of the disciples in the last conversation our Lord held with them before His death. In the world the little faithful flock of Bohemian Brethren had tribulation; but in Him they had peace.

The little church at Litiz grew in stature and in numbers, and many similar bodies sprang up in different parts of Bohemia—quiet, peaceable communities, whose sole bond was union with their Saviour, whose sole object was to minister to all men for His sake. Why, then, did all men speak evil of them, and all parties unite in persecuting them? We only know that they did so, and men had done the same before to Him in whom no fault could be found.

Rockyzan retained his power and place, and his influence with the King of Bohemia increased. For some time he used this influence cautiously, but constantly, in favor of the truth and its calumniated confessors. But at length the United Brethren were summoned before the Consistory at Prague.

The moment came when Rockyzan could no

longer unite the two services. The choice which had been so long unconsciously made had now to be decisively acted on. It was no longer prudent or safe for him to assist the Brethren; he therefore abandoned them. To excuse his own vacillation, he accused them of precipitation and turbulence; to prove his sincerity, he persecuted them. The king, it is said, wavered. The earlier teaching of Rockyzan himself, the convictions of his own conscience, the blameless lives of those he was called upon to attack, weighed heavily upon him. But Rockyzan was at his sovereign's elbow, to remind him of his coronation oath to extirpate heresy; to urge him to save himself, the more "moderate," and the "truth," by sacrificing the "extreme party." None can tempt like the fallen, and George Podiebrad yielded.

Thus Rockyzan began with waiving his convictions, in order to gain influence to promote them. He ended in turning the influence thus gained against the cause for which he had persuaded himself he sought it. The process in his mind was perfectly natural. The first act of unbelief, by which he virtually said, "I will uphold God's truth by disobeying Him," led logically to all the rest. The same question is being daily proposed, in divers manners, to some amongst us now. How are we answering it? Love is our surest logic. Whom are we loving best?

The Church of Bohemia was called to pass through one of those periods which will fill

eternity with deathless memories, echoing in "songs of deliverance," and in wailings of unpurifying remorse.

In the depth of winter the sick were dragged from their homes, and cast out into the fields to die. Some were seized, and sent back to their friends without hands or feet, maimed and wounded, as living tokens of the fate which awaited those who persevered. Some were tortured, and sent to heaven with strange tidings of the welcome which those whom the Son of God is not ashamed to call "brethren" met with on earth, dragged to death, burnt alive, even little children burnt at the stake. And the Brethren of Bohemia endured the fiery trial, and multiplied. They met together as usual to read the Word of their God; (how living and significant was every page read by the firelight of persecution!) to pray, as those pray who have no defender but God; and to show forth their Lord's death, as those do who have no hope but His coming again.

One evening, a body of them had assembled in a private house in Prague, to pray, and to celebrate the communion of the body of Christ. Amongst them was a venerable man, whom they revered as a patriarch. His hair had grown gray, his manly form had acquired a slight stoop, and the voice which pronounced the fatherly benediction was the tremulous voice of an old man; but his eyes were still bright with

an expression of childlike trust and love. It was Gregory of Raserherz.

They were preparing for the distribution of the sacred elements, when an interruption was caused by the sudden appearance of a messenger, who whispered something to Gregory, and then as suddenly disappeared.

When he had left, Gregory calmly addressed the congregation. The messenger, he said, was sent from one of the judges, who was a secret friend of theirs, to entreat them to disperse instantly, or he himself would be compelled to come within a short space of time to arrest them. Gregory expressed his own conviction that they should best fulfill the wish of Him who had said, "Let these go their way," by accepting the friendly warning, and quietly dispersing.

But there were amongst the assembly many enthusiastic young men, students of the University of Prague, who had embraced the oppressed cause with all the chivalrous ardor of youth—men who, like St. Peter, had not counted the cost, and therefore deemed their resources of endurance and fidelity inexhaustible—and many of these murmured openly against Gregory's counsel, declaring that they were ready to die for the truth, but would never consent to such a denial of it as this cowardly flight.

To their untempered zeal, stakes, racks, and scaffolds were as "trifles." Gregory knew they were *not* trifles; but the assembly was partly

borne away, and partly silenced, by their enthusiasm, and he resolved to cast in his lot with them.

Whilst they were proceeding to the celebration of the communion, the door opened, and the judge appeared, followed by a band of armed men.

The assembly was mute, until the voice of the judge broke the silence with the remarkable words—"It is written that they who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Then, with a strange inconsistency,* suffering himself to become the instrument of a cruelty which he abhorred, against men whom he revered and had sought to rescue, he added—

"Follow me to prison."

And giving the word to his followers, the leaders of the assembly were forthwith bound and led away.

It is said, that of those who had so confidently invited persecution, not one had the courage to endure it.

* * * *

An assembly of priests and magistrates, ministers of Christianity and of justice, were gathered in a room in the city of Prague, to try whether

* This is not the only example of such conscious inconsistency during this struggle. Lupacius, a friend of Rockyzan's, after deserting the United Brethren, wrote them a letter full of earnest exhortations to persevere in their course, and wise advice as to the best method of doing so.

by laying an old man on the rack they could induce him to renounce the convictions of his whole life, and betray his fellow-believers.

Gregory of Raserherz and John Rockyzan met once more; the nephew on the rack, the uncle watching to see whether torture would do for Gregory what prosperity had done for him.

But the high and holy One who inhabiteth eternity dwelt with that gentle and lowly spirit; and the sorer his enemies pressed upon him, only so much the closer did they drive him into the sanctuary of that Blessed Presence.

They could not succeed in wringing from Gregory one murmur or one word of recantation; but they did succeed in subduing his enfeebled frame with the extremity of pain.

He fainted, and lay for some time unconscious.

But He who spoke of old to His people in visions came near to Gregory in the cloud.

As he lay there, insensible to all around, he saw, as in a trance, a tree spreading its roots over the earth, and its branches to the heavens. It was covered with delicious fruit, and the birds found shelter under its branches, and ate of its fruit—filling the air with their sweet and happy songs. Three men guarded this tree.

The dream was significant, and time interpreted it.

The torturers believed their work was done—they thought him dead; and for a moment

Rockyzan's conscience awoke, and in an agony he exclaimed—

“O my poor Gregory!—would to God I were where thou art!”

But the old man recovered, and after procuring his release, Rockyzan, in spite of a solemn remonstrance from the Brethren, relapsed into his old course of action.

They concluded their last letter to him with the words, “Thou art of the world, and thou wilt perish with the world;” and he revenged himself by deliberately exciting a fresh persecution against them.

I only know of two subsequent events in the lives of Gregory and Rockyzan; both were consistent.

The United Brethren wished to give a more systematic organization to their community; and true to their faith that the Lord Jesus had not grown weary of guarding His Church, they met together in His presence, to seek His direction in the choice of their pastors.

Seventy of them met in a house in the town of Lotha; men of the higher and lower aristocracy, burghers and ministers of the gospel.

This was in 1467, fifty-two years after the burning of John Huss at Constance, and fifty-two years before Luther's burning of the Papal bull at Wittenberg.

After fasting, and reverently addressing God

in prayer, and listening to Him through His Word, they chose twenty men, and out of these nine as candidates for the sacred office. Gregory of Raserherz, hitherto the Provisional Elder, had been the most earnest in counseling a measure which was to deprive him of all his official authority; and he now offered up a solemn petition that God would choose their pastors for them.

Then, like the primitive disciples in the choice of a successor to the fallen apostle, (unmindful, perhaps, that this proceeding took place before the day of Pentecost,) they left the matter to the decision of the lot. The billets were drawn from an urn by a little child; and the three on which the decisive word *est* was written, fell to the lot of the three men whom, six years before, Gregory had seen in his vision on the rack guarding the fruitful tree.*

They were accepted with joy and gratitude, and installed into their office with a hymn of thanksgiving. They subsequently sought and obtained ordination from the bishop of an ancient Vaudois colony in Austria.

This was the first definite organization of the Church of the United Brethren of Bohemia and Moravia. Was not this act of joyful renunciation a beautiful close to our glimpses of such a life as Gregory's?

It is remarkable that these Austrian Vaudois,

* V. Bost's "Histoire de l'Eglise des Frères."

probably descended from the French Christians dispersed by the persecution in the days of St. Bernard, had scarcely thus linked themselves with the young Church of Bohemia, when they themselves were crushed and scattered by an exterminating persecution. They laid their hands on the heads of their successors, and blessed them, and then were taken to their rest.

The last voice that brings us tidings of John Rockyzan is from his deathbed.

He died, it is said, without hope.

PART II.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

I.

MAGDALEN.

HISTORY will tell you what kings were reigning, and what armies were fighting, in 1619—what subtle webs of policy were being spun in French and Austrian cabinets; how all Germany was quivering with excitement at the clever chess-playing of the Union and the League, and the preparatory agitations of the Thirty Years' War, the hero around whom all were to group, the mighty and lowly Gustavus Adolphus, not having yet appeared; she can also tell you of the solemn and joyous confederation which had taken place not long before between Lutherans, Reformed, and Calixtines, in Bohemia, in which even the United Brethren were included—thereby gaining quite a respectable position amongst the Bohemian national institutions;—but of that his-

tory of "holy and humble men of heart," of spiritual conflicts and eternal victories, which is written in heaven, she can tell you very little.

She will lead you through the steep, narrow streets of Prague, the most picturesque, she says, and romantic of European cities, whose walls and towers are dented with the sign-manuals of so many wars—and she will show you the mountain throne where the royalty of Bohemia sat for centuries, looking over her broad domain, the Moldau lying as a faithful guardian at her feet, ready to convey her behests whither she would; she will point out to you church after church, sacred with the relics of Bohemian martyrs—and palace after palace, gorgeous with the pomp of Bohemian nobles; she may even guide you to the portal of the house of the noble family Von Loss, whose young chief has been one of the Directors of the kingdom, and advocates of the United Brethren under the Emperor Rudolph; but she can not admit you within. Nevertheless, if you please, we will enter.

It was a grand old room, high and long, more of a gallery than a hall; in the deepening twilight, with its lofty Gothic windows, its strongly-shadowed pictures looming from tapestried walls—rich paintings of Titian's, quaint, hard, symbolic, family portraits of the Middle Ages—it had something of the mystic light of a church; yet it was apparently the ordinary sitting-room of the family, for it was full of rich, massive fur-

niture. A fire blazed on the hearth at one end, to keep off the chill of an evening in early autumn; and near it sat the young daughter of the house, and an old man in the sober dress of a Protestant minister.

The maiden was dressed gracefully, but plainly; you would scarcely have remarked her costume, had she been introduced into your drawing-room now, but for the rich Vandyked collar which has become characteristic of the century of the great portrait-painter. Nor am I sure that you would have remarked her face; it was not striking—its beauty lay deeper: had she been the only specimen of Bohemian beauty Titian had seen, he might probably not have said that he had seen the ideal of a female head at Prague; yet its poise on the long throat was so firm and graceful; the brow, as it lay bared by the throwing back of the long curls, was so innocent and calm; the eyelids, and dark lashes, threw such a soft shade on the cheek, and the mouth had such a happy smile on it as she sat at her easel, that Magdalen Von Loss was certainly one of those works of God on which we may still look, and say thankfully, "It is very good."

She laid down her brush among the brilliant colors and tinctures which she had been using, and bringing her work to the old man, she knelt before him, and placing the painting on his knee, playfully covered the book he had been reading.

“Now, father,” she said, (he was not her father, he was a Moravian pastor, called David Jablonsky, but she and her brother had acquired the habit of calling him so in their infancy, having been left to his guardianship, and had continued it since from reverence to his pastoral office, and his venerable and endearing character,) “now put down that great learned book—it is too large to read anywhere but in a pulpit—and let dear old John Huss enjoy his own thoughts a little, and look at me. I think two hundred and four years is long enough for him to have been talking to our incomparable Czeskan nation: now it is our turn.”

He placed a mark in the book, and let her lay it on a table beside him; then taking her drawing to the window, he looked at it for some minutes in silence.

It was from a hymn-book of the Brethren which she had been illuminating; the subject was from the *Te Deum*—

“The noble army of martyrs: praise thee.”

At the bottom of the page she had sketched in solid and sombre colors the martyrdom of Huss. Around the stake were gathered soldiers and priests, some with countenances breathing out slaughter, others turning away their heads in compassion; in the distance were shadowed forth the forms of many Bohemian martyrs; mothers weeping over the innocent faces of their dead children, widows over their slain husbands, young

girls chafing the hands of old men perishing of cold in the snow-fields. The face of Huss was turned heavenwards, illumined as if by some glorious vision. The smoke from the burning fagots arose in blue wreaths around the text, parting at each side to give glimpses of two medallions, and at the top melting away amidst sunset clouds. In the medallions, in shadowy purples and grays, she had sketched Huss's well-known dream—on one side priests and magistrates laboriously effacing the pictures of Jesus on the walls of his chapel of Bethlehem—on the other, angels restoring them in fairer colors. Above, in aërial transparent tints, such as bathe the clouds at sunset, was a meek, exulting band, bearing palms, and casting chaplets of victory at the feet of one whose form was half shrouded in light, one hand only coming distinctly out from the glory, to crown the martyr—and that hand was pierced.

“I like this, Magda,” the old man said, at length; “it is the best you have done.”

Then passing to her drawing-table, he turned over sheet after sheet of brilliant illuminations—historical sketches, portraits, borders of arabesque, rich branches of brown and golden autumn leaves, ferns and mosses, and delicate garlands of spring flowers.

“My child!” he exclaimed, taking her hands in his, “God has given you many gifts—spend them all for Him.”

She smiled: "This is my myrrh and frankincense," she said, "which I would lay at the feet of Jesus."

She knew Him, as yet, more as the Divine child, heralded by angels, than as the crucified Saviour, rejected of men, and dying for them.

Jablonsky reseated himself in the arm-chair by the fire. Magdalen piled the logs so as to make a cheerful blaze, and then seated herself on a footstool at his feet.

"Now, father," she said, clasping her hands on his knees, "tell me of our forefathers."

A sunbeam crept in through the deep windows, danced amongst the liquid colors, and lit up her happy, eager face, as she looked up and listened eagerly while David Jablonsky went over the oft-told but unwearying tale of the martyrs of Constance, and their prophecies of better times; of the dove-like messengers sent out over the earth by the isolated Church, east, and west, and south, to see if anywhere they could meet with their kindred—who returned, finding no rest for the soles of their feet; of the fierce wars of the blind Ziska and his Taborites, their valor and their defeat, God not consecrating such weapons; of the noble band of Christian heroes which arose from the ruins of the old cause; of Rockyzan the double-minded, driven with many winds and tossed; of the single-hearted Raserherz, resting on the rock, and his dream; of the old Austrian Vaudois, casting their mantle on the

young ministers of Bohemia, and then being borne aloft in chariots of flame; of the Jamnici, or cavern-dwellers, who followed Jesus into the desert, hiding in dens and caves of the earth, reading His Word by firelight, stealing out at night over the snow in search of food, treading in each other's footsteps, the last brushing out the traces of the rest; of one who was offered a year's respite, but preferred to die whilst his heart was warm, with five of his condemned brethren; of these and countless others, beloved of God, whom the world rejected, and now the heavens receive until the time of the restitution of all things.

The history of the Church of Bohemia was rich in such treasures; some of the sufferers had been amongst Magdalen's own ancestors; she had been fed with such stories from her infancy, yet her eye by turns moistened and kindled, and her cheek glowed as she listened. The history was ever fresh to her, for it was *true*, and its heroes were those ever-living ones whom she hoped to meet, and whose memories she delighted to garland with her fairest offerings.

"And now," she observed, when he ceased, "that rough season of ploughing and sowing is over, and we are reaping the harvest. If John Huss could see us now, how his heart would glow! The old chapel of Bethlehem restored to us, and wise men and princes filling it with their offerings and thanksgivings; our glorious old

brethren's Church, no longer despised, but honored of all men—admitted into the Consistory with Calixtines and Lutherans; all Europe, they say, resounding with praises of our discipline, all Bohemia filled with our churches and Bibles: has not our God done great things for us?"

"We have certainly sought great things for ourselves," he replied, thoughtfully; "I have little doubt John Huss would have rejoiced could he have foreseen these things; but I much doubt if he would rejoice to see them now. They have such different measurements of things in heaven from ours on earth."

"But surely," she said, "we must thank God when He gives us rest and honor, and fills our cup with blessings?"

"We must eat and drink and give thanks, Magda, and go on our way; food is given us to strengthen us for action, not that we may take our ease, eat, drink, and be merry."

"But," she said, "surely, as our Father loves us, He delights to see us happy? It would not please Him, when He has spread a feast and furnished a palace for us, that we should take lodgings in a hut beside it, and refuse to eat anything but black bread, because the palace and its fare are too good for us. Would not this be the mistake which you so often told me the monks made?"

"We must not throw away God's gifts, my

child," said Jablonsky; "we must reverently gather up the fragments, and *use* them. But we are stewards, not proprietors; *think what that means*; for a steward to build himself a palace and buy himself jewels with his lord's money, would be, not only waste, but robbery—robbing both the master and the servants. The monk mortifies himself that he may live to God, and he fails; but God quickens us that we may die to self. The ascetic renounces the earth that he may approach God; he is mistaken—God is nearer us than anything we can offer Him, but His presence necessarily extinguishes our brightest glories, as well as glorifies our meanest services. It estranges us from the world far more effectually to be sent into it (as Christ was, and all His are,) from the heavenly places, than to be toiling away from earth to heaven. The sun puts out our torches as well as the storm, but it extinguishes them in light."

"But are we not *free*, father?" she asked—"free both as ransomed captives, and as adopted children?"

"Faith in our redemption sets us free, Magdalen," he replied; "love to the Redeemer makes us servants again."

"I do not understand you," she said impatiently; "do you mean that the Emperor Rudolph did not do us a service when he granted us the Majestäts-Briefe?*" that my brother and the nobles

* Letter of grace.

are not right in spending all their energies to secure the establishment of our brethren? that we may not rejoice that our Church is honored instead of being despised? and that we may worship in our old temples instead of in caves and wildernesses?"

"Dear child," said the old man, gently taking her hand, "we shall see. The glory of the Church in this age is not to be clothed in purple and fine linen, but to be bearing the cross after her Lord, the servant of all men for His sake. She is necessarily a paradox amongst men; her laws are totally distinct from those of the world, as her nature is. When she is weak she is strong, when she is poor she is rich, when she is despised she is glorified, and this not because weakness and poverty and reproach are in themselves good things, but because, being always really weak, she is then only truly strong, when the consciousness of weakness leads her to abide close to her Lord."

"But," pursued Magdalen, rising and stirring the firelogs, then going to her easel and laying her hand on her beloved drawings, "would you have me renounce these happy, beautiful dreams, my painting and books, and all I delight in, and strip my soul bare to tread the Dolorous Way?"

"I would have you renounce nothing, my child," replied Jablonsky; "what will be the end of our heaven-born life in the resurrection, is its tendency now. The new life must overwhelm

and rule the old; we must be clothed upon, not unclothed; mortality must be swallowed up of life. I believe, as at the first opening of our Christian life, so ever after, God would have us receive before we renounce. I do not mean that you may not have to renounce much that is dear to you, that you must not have perpetually to resist the evil nature which abides within us till death: you may be called upon to pluck off the right hand and to pluck out the right eye—but it is by listening to His voice, and learning to know it well, and follow it, that you will find strength for this. Love is the element of Christian life, and self-sacrifice is on earth the element of love. Simply ask Him to fill your heart with His love, and your life with His presence, and then all that is displeasing to Him will be expelled from both, simply because there is no room for them. You need not pluck off the dead leaves, the young buds will gently push them off when the spring comes.”

“I need not, then, seek trial?” she said.

“No,” he replied, with a smile, “you need only seek faithfulness.”

There was a great spring against the door, as of the forefeet of some large animal. Magdalen ran to open it, and was nearly thrown down by the rough embraces of old Rudolph, her brother’s favorite stag-hound. “Down, Rudolph, down!” his master exclaimed; and kissing his sister, he advanced with his arm round her into the room.

He was many years older than Magdalen, though still young. "Magda! Herr Pastor!" he exclaimed, shaking Jablonsky's hand, "give me joy; I have the best news for you: we have succeeded at length, the states are unanimous, we have cast off our allegiance to the traitor Ferdinand, and offered the crown of Bohemia to Frederic Count Palatine of the Rhine; he has accepted it, and will be here in a few weeks. Our armies are united with those of Bethlen Gabor from Transylvania and Hungary before Vienna; Ferdinand and his priests are trembling in his palace, the emperor has not a firm place to set his foot on in all his dominions. Our cause is the cause of heaven; in a few months our Bohemian Church shall be the Queen of Protestant Germany."

"And our Queen, the lady Elizabeth of England!" exclaimed Magdalen, clapping her hands; "they say she is the noblest and most beautiful lady in Europe!"

"We shall see that," rejoined her brother, laughing, "when our little Magdalen stands by her side bearing her coronation robes."

Magdalen colored, and Henry Otho took up her sketch of Huss's martyrdom from the table.

"This is good, Magda," he said, "as far as it goes, but we will have another class of confessors of Christ now: men with strong arms and brave hearts, ready to do and dare all for the right. Why have you left old Ziska out of your

army of martyrs?" he continued, pausing before a portrait of the one-eyed warrior, and gazing on the wild, energetic countenance, the deep furrow down the brow—the stamp, they say, of military genius—the stern features lit up to a fiercer glow by the flickering of the fire-light.

Jablonsky laid his hand on the youngs man's shoulder as he stood thus, and said earnestly—

"I know you will deem my warning the mere querulous timidity of an old man; but once more, before you plunge Bohemia in civil war, I entreat you to remember to what Ziska's victories led. God bears with the world, but He judges His Church. He will not suffer her to prosper in disobedience to Him; and can it be obedience to resist your sovereign, and to return evil for evil?"

"Father," said the Count, respectfully but impatiently, "the die is cast, we must now await the issue; to advance may have been rash, to retreat is impossible."

"It is never impossible," the old man replied, opening the door, "to refuse to do wrong;" and with these words he left the room.

"Endurance is always beautiful in women," exclaimed Henry Otho, pushing the fire-logs together with his foot, "but only the last resource for men. Besides, we are not fighting for our religion, we are simply preventing the emperor from committing a thousand crimes. It may not be lawful to avenge ourselves; but what law

can withhold us from binding the arms of a mad-man?"

The brother and sister sat up until late, dwelling on the glorious future which lay before Bohemia and the truth.

Jablonsky also watched until a late hour that night, alone, with his Saviour, entreating with tears and agony of heart that, if possible, the cup of retribution might this time pass from his people, that the disciples who took the sword might this once not perish with the sword.

"They are blind," he pleaded, "but they mean to serve Thee. Oh, forgive the error, and reward the intention! or, if we must suffer, may our sorrows teach us and glorify Thee! and carry Thou Thy lambs in Thy bosom!"

II.

THE CORONATION.

ALL Prague was full of music and splendor.

Pastor Jablonsky sat in his study, thinking of his Sunday's sermon which he was to preach in Huss's old chapel of Bethlehem, when Henry Otho entered the room, leading his sister in her court dress.

A robe of blue velvet with ermine borders fitted tightly around her form and fell in dark massive folds from a girdle clasped with pearls. Her only ornament was her coronet, from which her brown hair fell in rich clusters.

"Magda is frightened at the idea of encountering all the strange eyes, Herr Pastor," said her brother, "you must reassure her."

"It is a solemn thing, is it not, father," said Magdalen, "the crowning and anointing of our king and queen before God?" And, kneeling before him, she added, "Give me your blessing."

He laid his hands on her head, and blessed her, and she went out with a glad heart.

The old man's thoughts went back to the time

when her mother had come into his study, dressed just as she was, and had begged him to take charge of her little Magda while she was at the Emperor Rudolph's court; and he left the house to follow the orphan maiden.

He saw her step into the family state coach, formed like an open van, but gorgeously painted and embossed with gold—not forgetting, in her pomp and excitement, to thank the attendants for every little service—her brother on horseback beside the carriage, proudly guarding her.

Every one was in the streets that day in Prague; the winter sun shone brilliantly in honor of the “winter king;”^{*} and flags of many colors, with triumphant inscriptions, flaunted from house to house. The Moldau was crowded with boats full of peasants in holiday attire; the Sclavonian youths and maidens thronged into every gate, singing old Czeskan national songs; regiments of Bohemian infantry marched up the streets, with spoils from the suburbs of Vienna, followed by the enthusiastic cheers of the people; troops of Hungarian and Transylvanian cavalry pranced on with their wild eastern music. The city was full of happy stir and bustle and life, the tramp of infantry and the prancing of horsemen, shouts of joyous voices, thrilling bursts of military music, grand pealings of old church hymns, resounding through the narrow streets, caught up

^{*} The name commonly given to the Palatine, Frederic, in Bohemia.

from hill to hill, from the Visschrad to the Hradshin, and floating down the Moldau to the plain.

As the old pastor moved through the throng, his pulse beat quick with the common enthusiasm; and he thought, "If men's hearts bound so high to greet an earthly sovereign, what will it be when the Ancient Nation and the whole earth shall go forth with songs and everlasting joy on their heads, to meet the King of kings, no stranger to His redeemed, singing, 'Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord?'"

In the evening, the brother and sister came to him apart, to tell him of the day's events.

Henry Otho related how Magdalen had outshone the queen herself in beauty and grace; how many eyes had rested on her, how many lips had murmured praises of her simple grace, and how the queen herself had addressed gracious words to her, saying that her court must not be without such an ornament; and then he spoke of the enthusiastic reception of the new sovereign.

"And now," he added, "we are a nation again at last; we have a Bohemian king, a Bohemian court, a Bohemian Diet, a Bohemian people, and a Bohemian Church."

And Magdalen came afterwards, and told how in all the assembly there had been none so noble and manly as her own brother, and the queen had mentioned him to her, "the dear, beautiful, good queen."

"Oh, father!" she said, "she is so gracious and gentle—I could love her as a mother—and yet so noble and queenly, my whole heart bowed before her; and when the people cried 'God bless her!' I could not help weeping, and praying that no harm may ever touch that royal heart."

"See, Magda," he replied, "all these sacred and blessed relationships has God given us to bind us in happy subjection to one another. Great is the peace of those with whom all these relationships are as links to Him—all centred in Him; great shall be the peace of the earth when this shall be the manifest law of all."

She looked earnestly in his face for an instant, then, kissing his forehead, she glided from the room.

Then returning and holding the door in her hand, she said—

"Why was it that the rich, magnificent choruses which filled the old cathedral when they crowned our king and queen seemed to bear me with inexpressible longings to the very gates of heaven, yet left me still longing *outside*, whilst, when we sing our quiet hymns together in church, all the heavens seem opened, and I lie as nothing beneath and amidst their glory, yet happy as a happy child?"

"Is it not ever so?" the old man answered: "the pomp of man's religion only expands the soul in vague emotions, as if *it* were the Infinite, and *leaves it empty*. God's religion brings down

the Infinite into the soul, and *fills* it. Let your heart be but as a flower meekly opened to the sky with all its stars, and the heavens shall drop dew into it, and the dead earth shall distil living sap into it. Only keep your soul lifted up, and God will take care that it shall grow."

III.

THE INCORRUPTIBLE INHERITANCE.

It was a crisp, bright spring morning in 1620.

David Jablonsky and Magdalen von Loss were prolonging their walk on their return from one of those invigorating early morning services of which the Moravian Brethren were so fond, Henry Otho being absent with the staff of Frederic's army.

They had mounted to the top of the Vissehrad. Down its precipitous side they looked on the river, the low golden sunbeams crisping the sides of a hundred masts, sparkling in a thousand ripples, glittering capriciously, through the morning mist, on roof and spire and tree along the valley of the Moldau, and in the distance clothing with delicate saffron and violet tints the woods and the tops of the hills; whilst the clouds were as bird-of-paradise plumes, fresh rose-leaves, pearly shells, scattered at random from God's treasure-chambers, and all—the colors of the clouds, and sky, and hills, the laughter of children from the city, the songs of birds—all fresh, and delicate, and pure, and light, as the soft fragrance of the budding earth which wrapt their senses imperceptibly as in a delicious dream.

On the other side lay Prague, the city of their fathers; church, and palace roofs, and gilded pinnales, and white walls shining with sharp edges of light; the old Bohemian cathedral on the Hradshin crowning all the city.

“And all, all,” said Magdalen, softly, “working together *for good*; all the ministers of life and love! Oh, happy earth, with God shining on it, and happy, happy creatures we, to live on it, beloved of Him!”

“*You hath* He reconciled,” murmured the old man; “all power is given to Him in heaven and in earth, and in the fulness of times *all* things shall be gathered together in Him.”

Then, after some minutes of happy silence, she said, as they descended the hill—

“What hinders the world from being Eden still to hearts redeemed and set free, and at peace with God?”

“His presence does indeed make a temple and an Eden about the faithful heart here,” he replied, “as it will make heaven hereafter; but, dear child, this earth is not all Eden, not Eden *for all*, for there are on it dead souls turned away from the light of God—thousands who sin without repentance and suffer without being chastened. For millions on it, Magda, this world is an hospital, and a charnel-house, a place of sin and pain; there are men to whom the morning for which we watch shall come as a sudden destruction, and a terrific close of life and hope for ever.”

"But that can be no cause," she said, shuddering, "why those who love God, knowing His great love, should not let some songs of joy ascend to greet Him from His fallen creation?"

"It can be no cause why we should not be thankful; but it is abundant reason why we should not sit still and dream, painting fairy visions on the darkness," he rejoined. "In Him we are indeed commanded to rejoice always. His love to us, and the union of the believing heart to Him, can not be more perfect than at the first moment when, in faith, we touch but the hem of His garment; our life is eternal, and 'hidden' above all storms, and therefore our peace is in its nature absolute and unchangeable as the peace of heaven. To dwell in the sense of this is our strength; such holy, reasonable joy is, in itself, service. The very presence of a heart so manifestly at peace with God and all He sends, is a gospel."

"Then why speak of this beautiful earth so often as a mere wilderness to be passed through?" she exclaimed: "I feel so at home here; and would not God have us feel so, while we remain?"

"Magda," he replied, gently, "it is most important that our peace should rest on objective realities, not on inward emotions. Truth is always the happiest thing to believe in the end: for the storm comes to all, and truth is the only thing that stands it. Now, when God said,

‘This is not our rest.’ He meant what He said ; yet surely He did not mean this for ill news, but for the gladdest tidings men can hear. We have a ‘*better country*,’—a city that *hath* foundations ; and we are hastening home, not empty-handed, but with hands and heart full of His gifts, to minister to all, as we journey, and with lips overflowing with His blessed invitations. And ever as we go, the Great Comforter is fashioning in our hearts, through fire and flood, the graces which are of great price in the sight of our Lord.”

“You will forgive me,” she resumed ; “I am afraid I must be very cold-hearted ; but earth is so warm and familiar to me, with my brother and you, and so many to love, that I can not help weeping sometimes, when I think of leaving it. I am not weary of life, you know, and I do not need sleep or rest ; and the grave is so lonely, and the heavens, with the spirits and their unwearying harps and songs—we know so little about them.”

“Dear Magda,” he said, “God will teach you all His lessons in His own time ; but have you forgotten the *Resurrection* ? Look beyond the parting to the gathering, look on beyond the dim, unclothed, spirit-state in which the human heart finds no resting-place but the ‘*for ever with the Lord*’—to that bright morning when He who once appeared to cheer a weeping woman who loved Him, calling her ‘Mary,’ shall come again to

breathe on us an eternal peace, and to gather the whole redeemed family into the Father's house. Then shall the pedestal of His cross become the footstool of His throne—then shall the earth, unfettered and impregnated in the new life, 'give forth her increase,' an Eden in the keeping of an Adam who has endured temptation, and vanquished the tempter—the second Adam, and His heavenly Eve, created, whilst He slept, from out His pierced side, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh. This, Magdalen, is the glorious hope for which we wait; no mere unclothing of a wearied spirit, that it may lie down and rest, but the outpouring of the fulness of life; no mere selfish deliverance from conflict and pain, but the redemption of the whole Church from all fetters, the emancipation of the whole creation, the day of the triumph of our Lord, *the marriage supper of the Lamb*.^{*} This is the overwhelming joy which lies before us—for this the whole family in earth and heaven wait—for this result of the travail of His soul, the Conqueror also waits, sitting at the right hand of God."

Much more he said, which I may not now repeat; but as he spoke, tears gathered in Magdalen's eyes, and she said—

"Father! I am but a child; I have much to

^{*} I do not at all mean to attribute these definite thoughts as to the future to the whole body of the Moravians. I believe there have always been individuals amongst them who have in some measure rested on them.

learn; these things overwhelm me. I seem stepping into a new and infinite world, and my heart trembles.”

“Fear not, my child,” he answered—“God teaches very patiently. He will take thee by the hand, and lead thee gently on. The Almighty One is also the meek and lowly in heart; He gives wisdom liberally to all that lack and ask for it, and upbraideth not.”

Magdalen read her Bible much that evening, with a new reverence—read of the new creation, commenced in the soul of the feeblest believer, destined to find its completion when we shall awake in perfect likeness to the risen Lord, and its final home in the new birth from dissolution of the new heavens and the new earth; and she lay down to sleep with the joyful consciousness that she was a learner in a school of inexhaustible truth, having for her teacher Him who knows all things because He has made them, knows the heights of God, and the depths of man, by being both.

And the morning found Him still about her path as He had been about her bed—and the day's work shone to her with the light of her eternal home

IV.

THE BATTLE.

MAGDALEN had need of something to strengthen her. She had plenty of petty trials to prove whether the new hopes which had arisen on her heart were mere pictures of light—glowing, but opaque—or transparencies letting in real light on the dark corners of life.

The affairs of Bohemian Protestantism looked more and more gloomy every day.

Frederic threw away half his advantages by mismanagement, and let the rest slip away by his indolence and indecision. His generals were jealous of each other; his Bohemian subjects were jealous of the Germans; and there was no strong will, no plastic mind, to mould the discordant elements into harmonious combination. Men who should have supported one another only jostled one another, because there was no one to fix them in their places; and whilst the Protestants were hesitating and quarreling about their rank in the procession, the Emperor Ferdinand and his Catholics came and stole away the ark.

Henry Otho von Loss, and other wise and disinterested men amongst his party, doubtless saw this, but they saw it as the guardian angel is said to see the errors of his charge—with fruitless foresight.

They labored, and entreated, and contended, but their voices seemed only to serve to increase the clamor, until at last they had no resource but each to do his own duty, and leave things to arrange themselves as they would.

All this fretted Henry Otho's temper intolerably; like a strong wave struggling against an ebbing tide, to spend all his strength, only to find himself at each successive effort further from the goal, it was very bitter; and, in addition to this natural disappointment, he felt all that a Christian feels who has entangled himself in a thousand cares and schemes, and yet fears to look straight up to God, lest one clear glance from Him should pierce through all the laborious fabric, and smite it to pieces in an instant. Not that he was precisely conscious of this, but he felt less at home with himself, and therefore hurried the more impetuously on in the path he had chosen.

Magdalen had entered heart and soul into all her brother's schemes for liberating Bohemia and the truth, but she was less involved in the details of their practical execution; doubts of their consistency with the calling of the Church to lowly patience, and rendering good for evil, occasionally crossed her mind, and of late she had not

sought to banish them, but had simply asked for more light.

At first, in the ardor of her new interest in Divine truth, she had sought to communicate it to her brother; but he grew first weary and then impatient, so that she ceased to speak to him on the subject, and endeavored to enter as much as she could into his cares.

But even this did not always please him: "What could women understand of such things?" And then, if she took refuge in her painting, he would say, "These were no times for such child's play."

At first Magdalen was surprised and indignant at this—she for whom his watchful love had always been providing some new pleasure; and often she was sorely perplexed and tried; but her tact and gentleness seldom failed: not that it was any great merit in her; she loved her brother literally as herself, and often some burst of repentant tenderness would make up to her for a thousand words, harsher than any he had ever spoken; for the kindness, she knew, was meant, the harshness not.

She was always ready to welcome him with some playful or loving word, or some proof of thought for his comfort; thus working out the prayers which, with so many tears, she daily offered for him.

So she was daily gaining wisdom in the lore of life, the blessed art of watching and ministering to the sick at heart.

God was training her for further lessons.

He was leading her consciously "with His eye," teaching her with His own voice the way in which she should go; and, though with the rougher lessons of external providence, He was as surely training and directing the yet unsubmitive heart of her brother.

And the old pastor looked on, and helped, and counseled—and where he could do neither, prayed for both his children, thus laboring together with God.

* * * * *

It was the eve of the 8th of November, 1620, the eve of one of those decisive days on which centuries of a nation's destiny are suffered to depend. All Prague, the Imperial and Bohemian armies encamped in its neighborhood, all Bohemia and Protestant and Catholic Germany, lay awaiting the issue of the battle to be fought on the White Mountains.

Once more Magdalen von Loss and her brother sat in the old room, with its family portraits and tapestry, its oaken cabinets, and high, deep windows—chatting by the blazing hearth.

Insensibly, as the twilight deepened, their conversation wandered off from national prospects and dangers, to the old days before care had set in on them—to plots and ambuscades concocted behind the tapestry, to tears shed over difficult

lessons, through which could be seen no glimpse of hope—bitter griefs, forgotten the next day; to Henry Otho's gracious condescensions, and Magdalen's unlimited reverence; quarrels cemented into indestructible alliances; blame borne for one another, and pleasures hoarded up; all the world of love and trust they had been to one another—the orphan brother and sister.

They chatted merrily of it all, not daring to look forward, or to touch any deeper chords.

Then all the household met in the great hall to commit themselves and one another to the care of God; and His peace came down on them as they prayed, so that the young Count took a hopeful leave of them all.

“Magda,” he whispered, “forget all my cross words: things have gone wrong sometimes, but one way or another God's cause must triumph: after to-morrow we will be His happy and trustful children again. Good-bye.”

Magdalen bore up bravely, only after he was gone weeping and praying for him, till she fell asleep from weariness.

But they were soft, childlike tears, falling through the light of happy hopes.

Henry Otho von Loss lay by one of the watchfires in the Protestant encampment, on the White Mountains. The country was glowing with the feverish flicker and glare of many watchfires, gleaming here and there on the forms and arms

of men, scattered over the ground in every attitude of hasty slumber.

With the exception of the patrols and those who had to plan to-morrow's movements, the two armies were asleep.

The night was still, yet beneath the stillness there was an undercurrent of stir and preparation; some groups talking in hushed voices, others stealthily changing their position, the crackling of fires, and the occasional challenge of sentinels.

Above, the calm was absolute, the moon passing noiselessly in and out amongst white clouds, and all the heavens full of her peaceful light.

As he lay there, musing, he saw a dark figure approaching the height, which on nearer approach he recognized to be that of Jablonsky. He beckoned the old man to him, and they sat down together by the fire.

"What brings you hither at this hour?"

"I came to see what was the character of an army sworn to defend the holy cause."

"And you found little satisfaction? The camp is a barren field for missionary labor—at least, until after the battle."

"And yet where is there more need of a life hidden beyond the grave?"

"Did they listen to your message?" said Von Loss.

"Some listened and some mocked, and some turned away, and some began to tell me of Christian homes and early childish lessons, until they

wept and made promises for to-morrow. The hearts of men are the same everywhere."

"But did you find the men generally sanguine about the issue of to-morrow?"

"To be candid with you, I did not; your army, they say, is so mixed; the Bohemians seem indignant at having to fight under Germans, and beside foreigners from Hungary and Transylvania, whom they look on as little better than Turks and barbarians."

"Father!" said the soldier, rising and standing before him, "must not the cause of the Almighty triumph?"

"It must, it shall," said the old man, firmly, "though not perhaps by the arms of the mighty. Our banner of victory is the cross. The cross, and not the sword; for we also conquer by sacrificing, not by avenging ourselves. The cross, and not the crucifix; for He who was once nailed to it now rests in triumph, having obtained for Himself, and for us, an eternal victory."

"I understand," said Henry Otho, in a low voice; "but if, perchance, we have chosen wrong ways to His end, must not His end nevertheless be reached, and His cause prevail?"

"His triumph is as certain as His Godhead," replied Jablonsky, solemnly; "living or dying, vanquished or victorious, we only further His supreme and blessed purposes. He has undertaken, not only to save His people, but to guide them, and He will do it."

“It is well,” replied Von Loss : “whether my earthly life serve, by being trampled into soil, to nourish other lives, or, by spreading into a forest, to shelter them, I can trust Him implicitly with it; for me, and for His Church, *it is well*. My blood may flow in vain, but my Saviour’s can not. Kneel once more, father, and pray for me, for does not His blood cleanse from all sin?”

The old man prayed in few and simple words, for his heart was full; and then embracing Henry Otho, he hastened back to Prague.

On the next day, the cause of Bohemian Protestantism received its death-blow. The Bohemians gave way the last, but to die at their posts was all their valor could achieve.

As the consequence of that day, the pastors were driven first from Prague, and then from Bohemia; the churches were closed; those who could emigrate, did; those who could not, kept the faith in secret, or betrayed it, or were put to death.

The Reformation was crushed in Bohemia until this day.

V.

THE VICTORY.

EIGHT months had passed, bringing round to Magdalen and her brother the eve of another battle.

But the issue of this conflict was certain, the armor proof.

It was the 20th of June, 1621.

On the morrow, Henry Otho von Loss, with twenty-six defenders of the Protestant religion, was to die on the scaffold.

They allowed Magdalen to enter the cell, in the castle of Prague, in which her brother was imprisoned, and to spend an hour with him there. They had been praying together, and now they sat quietly hand in hand, fearing to make those last moments pass more quickly by any movement or burst of emotion. The thousand fragments and reminiscences and farewells, which that hour could never have contained, were all condensed into the one prayer—

“Father, we commit one another to Thee.”

“Tell Pastor Jablonsky,” he said, “that his

words are with me to the last. I am sure he has been praying for me, and has been answered."

They had not suffered any of the pastors of the Bohemian Brethren to visit the prisons. The Jesuits distinguished them with this especial hatred.

"After all my mistakes, Magda," he murmured, "that He should suffer me to die for Him!"

She did not attempt to speak.

"Magda," he resumed, "my sister, you will suffer, but trust His love; it is not charity or kindness, Magda, it is love—love deeper than mine. And, sister, do not struggle with sorrow, it is of no use; *sink down on Him*. He can heal, He will sustain you. And—oh, do not grieve an instant for me! You are the martyr, not I."

She sank on his shoulder, and they wept together; but the step of the jailer echoed through the narrow passage, and the long embrace had to be unclasped.

Once more they stood hand in hand, and Henry said, calmly, "By and by, my sister, after the little while, we shall have time to say all we would."

"At His feet," murmured Magdalen—for his sake, with a strong effort, repressing her tears.

They parted in silence.

Magdalen went home alone. She entered the house without speaking, and, quietly passing through the hall and up the staircase, she opened

the door of the family sitting-room, and softly closing it again, she sat down before her drawing-table, and leaned her head upon her hands.

She was still leaning thus to avoid the pain of seeing, when she heard a soft step in the room, and looking up, she saw pastor Jablonsky standing close before her.

She was not weeping, but tears ran fast over his cheeks as he looked at her, and she stretched out her hand to him, and said gently—

“Life is not so very long, father, after all.”

He could not answer, but he sat down beside her; and folding her hands on her knees, she said no more.

She sat long without moving, when a rough head was thrust under her hand, and in another moment old Rudolph's paws were on her lap.

Then her tears fell fast on his shaggy head; he looked wistfully in her face and moaned, and licked her hands as if to comfort her, until, hiding her face on the old man's arm, she wept bitterly.

And Jablonsky whispered—

“*Now Jesus loved Mary and her sister and Lazarus.*”

On that evening the confessors were removed to the Town Hall. The scaffold was already erected before it; and as they passed, many of their brethren and fellow-prisoners greeted them from the windows with hymns, and the people thronged around them and wept. *

* The following scene is strictly historical.

On the morrow, they all dressed as if for a wedding; and one by one, as they were led out to execution, they cheered one another on to the combat. The farewell would not be long.

When it came to the turn of Henry Otho von Loss, a Lutheran minister accompanied the guards. Von Loss had been amongst those who, perhaps, from too fond an attachment to the Church of their fathers, had refused to receive the Lord's Supper from the hands of a Lutheran: but when he saw the minister, he arose from his seat as if in a kind of ecstasy, and said to him—

“How I rejoice to see you, man of God, that I may tell you what has happened to me! I was sitting in this chair, grieving bitterly that I could not receive the Supper, having desired, as you know, a minister of our own Church. I fell asleep in my grief: and lo, in a dream, the Lord appeared to me, and said, ‘My grace is sufficient for thee: I cleanse thee in My blood.’ At the same instant, I felt, as it were, His blood flow over my heart; and since I awoke, I have felt singularly strengthened and refreshed.”

Thereupon he broke into these words of triumph—

“Yes; *believe*, and thou hast eaten the flesh of the Son of man. I have no more fear of death. My Jesus comes to meet me with His angels, to lead me to His marriage supper, where I shall for ever drink with Him the cup of joy and gladness.”

He ascended the scaffold full of joy, first prostrating himself in prayer, then having risen, and laid aside his garments, he again knelt, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive me into Thy glory!" and whilst he was uttering this last word, he received the death-blow.

Thus did the cause of external Protestantism in Bohemia fail, and thus did the Church of God triumph.

It was night—a summer's night; and under the calm stars a funeral procession bore the body of Henry Otho von Loss to his tomb amongst the recesses of the hills.

The mourners were a band of outlawed Protestants, yet they sang hymns as they went—hymns of hope and victory—and the soft music was peaceful as the songs of angels, transpiercing the calm.

One woman followed the bier, leaning on the arm of an old man. When they reached the new-made grave, he left her to perform the last rites over the dead, and she stood a little way off alone, her hand resting on the head of an old stag-hound.

The corpse was lowered into the grave, and the earth fell on the coffin.

Then arose the beautiful Moravian Funeral Litany,* floating through the silence with its responsive music.

At first all joined—at least, all who could for

* I do not know whether the Litany, from which the following extracts are taken, existed so early as this. It is now used in the Easter Morning Service, in the Moravian cemeteries,

weeping, for amongst the mourners were many faithful old servants of the family—in the hymn,

“I know that my Redeemer lives—

the eternal song of triumph of the resurrection.

Then Pastor Jablonsky said—

“Glory to Him who is the Resurrection and the Life! He hath been dead, but now He liveth for evermore; and he who believeth in Him, though he were dead, yet shall he live. To Him be glory in the Church which awaits His appearing, and in that around His throne.”

And the assembly responded—

“For ever and ever. Amen.”

Then the minister’s voice arose again, at first feeble and broken, but gradually gathering strength from the power of the words he uttered:—

“Our Lord Jesus Christ,
By Thy human birth,
By Thy meritorious tears,
By all the miseries of Thy life,
By Thy languor and Thy pains,
By the distress and anguish of Thy soul,
By Thine agony and bloody sweat,
By Thine insults, stripes, and wounds,
By Thy painful death,
By Thy return to us, or
By our resting in Thy bosom”—

And with one voice the people cried—

“Comfort us, O Lord our God!”

Then, turning to the mourners, and especially to her who stood apart, he lifted up his hands, and said—

“The Lord bless thee and keep thee.

“The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.

“The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee *peace*.”

And all the little band responded—

“In the name of Jesus. Amen.”

Then leaving the grave, Jablonsky went again to Magdalen—for it was she—and led her home.

“My child,” he said, trying in vain to check his own tears—“My child, God is indeed teaching thee the lessons of the wilderness.”

“But He is with me,” she replied; “and He teaches me also that it is the way to our rest.”

And the next morning, like another Magdalen to another sepulchre, whose opening has made all burial-places for us only sleeping-places, she came early, when it was yet dark, unto the tomb.

And kneeling on the fresh earth, she said with her whole heart, amidst her sobs—

“Master!”

And Jesus said by His Spirit to her heart—

“Peace be unto thee! Go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God.”

She and her brother were *His*. His Father was their Father. It was enough. She also had

learned the meaning of the words Death and Resurrection.

The Great Hope of the Church had become the great hope of her heart.

She also went forth in His strength, to witness by her life that the Lord was risen indeed.

VI.

THE PEACE.

MAGDALEN never married. Without father or mother, or brother or sister, an exile from her country, cut off from all ties of kindred, she passed the prime and close of her life, which was a long one. Can you conceive anything more desolate?

In a little cottage in the suburbs of Dresden, an old paralytic woman lay on a low bed. Everything about her was scrupulously clean, and a young girl, having just completed her arrangements about the room, was seated by the fire, knitting.

"Why does not she come?" said the old woman, querulously. "It is long past her time; but the strong and healthy never think how slowly time passes on the sick-bed."

"O grandmother," said the girl, "I am sure she always thinks! The snow is lying thick on the ground, and every now and then it beats in heavy drifts against the window. Perhaps the Fräulein may not be able to come to-night." But the latch was softly raised before she could

finish her sentence, and the Fräulein entered, and, after a few preliminary inquiries, took her usual place beside the old woman's bedside, and began to read to her from the New Testament.

It had been rather a hopeless task, and if Magdalen's eyes had not been directed rather to Divine promises than to visible results, she would have grown weary of it years before; for, although the old woman always listened attentively, and was very much aggrieved if the daily visit were omitted, she seldom vouchsafed any more cheering declaration than—

“Well, all these things are very good; but the comforts of this life are very needful, and the poor body must be cared for.”

But to-night, when she had laid aside the book, and had arisen from her prayer, and had presented the sickly creature with a warm shawl of her own knitting, the old woman's heart seemed touched at last, and grasping Magdalen's hand tight for some moments in her own, she said—

“Well the comforts of this life are very needful; but the Great Gift of God, and His grace in the heart are above all.”

It was reward enough for labors a thousand times more irksome. Tears gathered in Magdalen's eyes, and she went home with a glad heart, too happy to heed the cold, but not too full to notice how the pure moonlight lay in silvery streaks on the pure, smooth snow, roofing common houses with alabaster, fretting the bare

trees with fairy tracery, and to thank God from her heart for all the changing beauty of this fair earth. Magdalen's religion was no mere inward emotion: it was a reception into her inmost soul of the truth, which is the "incorruptible seed" of the new life; it was the living relationship of a redeemed sinner to the living God. Being received into the family, and taught the freedom of the child, she had also been taught the "perfect freedom" of those who, having no object in life but His service who guides every step of their lives, labor under no cares, and can meet with no hindrances.

Two little faces were peeping out of the door of a house in Dresden.

"Why would she go out this bitter weather?" said one.

"We will go to meet her if she does not come soon," said another.

But in a few minutes they caught a glimpse of her coming quickly up the street.

Joyous welcomes were on every lip, laughing reproaches, and tender, loving words, and in a few moments the children had "Sister Magdalen" in by a blazing Christmas fire; one chafing her hands, another taking off her snowshoes, a third removing her wet cloak, a fourth bringing a warm shawl, and a fifth busy little fairy preparing a basin of hot pottage.

These were all orphans of Bohemian martyrs, to whose maintenance and education Magdalen

von Loss had devoted the remains of her brother's confiscated fortune and her life.

Then, when she had rested, there were narratives of the day's doings and learnings to be given, and counsel to be sought; and in reward for lessons well learnt, and tasks well done, came the general plea for a story of old Bohemia.

The firelight shone cheerfully on the eager child-like faces, and on the gray hair and quiet happy eyes of the story-teller. Then were the old heroic tales she had listened to by the fire-side at Prague poured forth afresh into the young fresh hearts;—for when will the harvest end, to be reaped from the seed of one holy life, laid down for the brethren, and laid up in the book of Church History written in heaven?

“Oh!” said one of the children, “we will be more useful than ever, and more like our fathers, when this bitter frost is passed, and we can go out again. I wish there were no such thing as frost.”

“Do not murmur at the frost and snow, dear child,” said Magdalen, smoothing back the eager little girl's hair; “the fire never burns so brightly as in the frosty weather: and the snow, you know, is God's mantle, under which the flowers are kept warm against the spring.”

“That is one of Sister Magdalen's parables,” the children whispered thoughtfully to one another.

The spring came. One of Magdalen's orphans

was betrothed to the pastor of Lohmen ; she had given the children a holiday amongst the wild beautiful gorges of the Saxon Switzerland ; and now she and the young betrothed stood alone on the rough bridge which connected the heights of the Bastei with those on which are the ruins of the castle of the robber knight of Thuba.

On one side of the narrow bridge they could look down into the deep hollow of the Grünbachthal, tall firs seeming like rock-plants in the crevices of the gigantic perpendicular walls of rock, and the deep green fields resting peacefully below.

But they were turning in the other direction, where, on the left, the Elbe wound beneath the heights of Königstein and Lilienstein, flattened as if for the pedestals of fortresses ; and on the right, through wooded hills, to the broad plains of Dresden ; whilst beyond, the setting sun glowed on the mountains which girded in Bohemia. The soft air was full of light and of the fragrance of the flowers it had opened ; snow-drops and blades of grass trembled and shone in the interstices of the natural masonry.

“How glorious and wonderful all this is!” said Magdalen ; “think, my child, what it will be when every city shall be a holy city, every cottage a temple of God ; when the grace of God shall rest on all hearts as it now does on all nature ; when the Church, from her heavenly dwelling-place, with its ever-open gates, shall

minister to men as even angels never can;—helping as those help who have been tried; comforting as those comfort who have suffered!”

“Did you always love nature,” asked the maiden, “as you do now?”

“I always loved her,” Magdalen replied, “but I think never so much as now; the love of years of familiar kindness is stronger, my child, than the glow of early feeling. In my youth my thoughts danced like fairies in the sunbeams, often with the glancing of their bright wings hiding the deeper beauty of God’s works. Now I can look and listen, and never tire of being still, and letting the beautiful pictures lie upon my heart.”

“But, Sister Magdalen, you did not glide all at once into this calm?”

“No. Thirty years ago all my life was laid waste and rent asunder. It was by the grave of my only brother that I learnt the calling of the stranger traveling to the heavenly home; and the lesson has been worth the cost”

“But is there no way of learning these lessons but through suffering such as that?” asked the betrothed bride, shuddering.

“God has a thousand ways of teaching us, my child,” she answered. “He can teach by giving as well as by withholding. It is her blessedness that best keeps the bride apart—the unchangeable love of her Lord, and her waiting for Him. There is another way of reaching the power of His

resurrection than through the grave of our hopes. The Lord Jesus is Himself the resurrection and the life; as in union with Him all things are ours to *possess*, so in communion with Him all things are ours to *use*. By sitting at His feet we may learn a thousand lessons, else to be taught by rougher voices. May He keep us there!"

"But Bohemia?" said the girl, as she looked towards the southern hills; "do you believe our country is lost to the gospel for ever."

"We do not know, my child, what seeds are ripening under the soil. Perhaps our old Church may yet arise with a purified heart to teach Christendom the great lesson, that with us it is not to be as amongst the Gentiles, 'for he that is great amongst you, let him be your *minister*:' it is my constant prayer."

Thus sitting at His feet, and ministering to Him in His brethren, her peaceful being shedding balm around her, her whole womanly nature developed and satisfied by the interchange of child-like dependence and motherly care, she passed on to her rest. Can any life be desolate with such companionship and such service?

Need any Christian life be without them?

"Fear not, little flock."

"The Father himself loveth you."

"For the Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants, and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate."

PART III.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

I.

THE OLD MAN'S PROPHECY.

THE Reformation, as to external establishment, was crushed in Bohemia, but the living streams were still oozing through the land, and secretly nourishing the roots of many plants of our heavenly Father's planting.

Throughout the seventeenth century we catch accidental glimpses of secret meetings, for receiving the Lord's Supper, of Christian families; of one dying without desire of extreme unction, being, he said, already anointed and sealed of the Holy Spirit, and as sure of his salvation as of the existence of the sun, yet in whose life the priest could find no fault, and in his death only occasion for the prayer that he also might die the death of the righteous. Indeed, so many of these "hidden ones" were there, that when, in 1716, Charles XII. of Sweden wrung from the emperor

toleration for a stated number of Protestant churches, 70,000 were found ready to attach themselves to one of them.

One evening, in the year 1707, five young men were gathered around the deathbed of an aged Christian, a descendant in spirit, as well as by the ties of natural kindred, of the ancient Brethren of Bohemia.

These were the five Neissers, nephews of George Jæshke. The calm of death in the peace of God pervaded the room. No one spoke. A little boy stood by the bedside, his hands clasped in those of the dying man. It was the son of his old age. Jæschke was about to rest from a life of many labors—faithful preaching of gratuitous salvation—faithful living in the peace of the reconciliation of Jesus—labors which might have seemed to be worse than fruitless, for the band of the old Christians was constantly diminished by death, whilst the numbers of the compromising constantly increased. But the old man did not despair; he rested on the promises, which rise eternally above the storms. Like the Alpine hunter, through the clefts of the clouds he looked down on the world.* He conjured the young men to be faithful to the truth which had made them free.

“It is true,” he said, “that our liberty is destroyed; that the greater part of our children are more and more entangled in the love of the world,

* *Vide* “Schiller’s *Wilhelm Tell*.”

and fall off to the Papacy; that, from all appearances, one might say the cause of the Brethren was lost. But, my children, a great deliverance will come for those who remain. You will see it. Whether it will take place in Moravia, or you will have to leave this Babel, I know not. I think, however, you will have to quit this country, in order to find a place where you may serve God according to His Word. When the hour comes, be ready. Beware of being amongst the last, or of being left entirely behind. And now, I commend to you this little one, my only child. I commend him especially to thee, Augustine Neisser. He also must belong to Jesus. Lose not sight of him, and if you leave the country take him with you."

Then, with tears, he blessed the child and his nephews, and not long after, he rested in peace.

I know not whether we should call this confidence, prophecy, or simply faith. At any rate, it was abundantly fulfilled.

II.

REBUILDING FROM THE RUINS.

It was the 15th May 1725. A company of about thirty persons were gathered in a marshy spot, on a declivity by the highroad from Loban to Zittau in Saxony.

All around them arose an uncleared forest—tall pines looking old and sombre amidst the fresh green of the budding forest trees. On a leveled space amongst the bushes they were laying the foundation of a house.

It was a strangely assorted company. A Saxon nobleman and his bride, a young Swiss baron, with their friends; and on the other side, nine or ten mechanics and peasants, with their families. But the bond which united them was far more real than the distinctions which separated them. The noblemen were the Count von Zinzendorf and the Baron de Watteville, to whom all their property and influence were as nothing, except as a trust for their Master; and the mechanics were men who had suffered imprisonment and

loss of all things, and had left country and kindred for the sake of Christ and His gospel.

Amongst them were the brothers Neisser and old George Jäschke's son. The Count spoke earnestly and affectionately to those present on the object of the building they were about to erect, of the faith which had once made them exiles and provided them an asylum.

"Rather," he said, "than that this building should not tend to promote the glory of Him in whose name it was founded, might fire from heaven consume it!"

Before he began to speak, five travelers came along the highroad, way-worn, and poorly clad. They stood apart, and listened in reverent silence.

Then the Baron de Watteville drew off a ring, the last jewel he had retained, and laying it on the foundation-stone, knelt there, and prayed aloud.

The power of the Holy Ghost overwhelmed every heart as he prayed. When he ceased, the whole of the little band were in tears. And the five strangers came forward, and said—

"Surely this is the house of God: here shall our feet rest."

That house was the first in the settlement at Herrnhut. The travelers were also exiles from Moravia for the sake of the faith. They had escaped from prisons, and across mountains, by deliverances which would have seemed miraculous,

were not answers to prayer the "daily bread" of the disciples. Amongst them was that David Nitschmann, who was afterwards the first missionary to the West Indian slaves, and the first bishop of the restored Church of the Brethren of Bohemia and Moravia.

III.

SEEDS BORNE BY THE WINDS.

IN a room in the island of St. Thomas, in the West Indies, some years after the foundation of Herrnhut, Count Zinzendorf was awaiting the arrival of some prisoners whose release he had procured with difficulty from the tyrannical planters. When they arrived, harassed and emaciated by three months of imprisonment, he saluted them—as they used to salute the early martyrs—by reverently kissing their hands in the presence of their oppressors.

These were some of the exiles of Herrnhut, men of the old martyr-race of Bohemia.

A few days after, you might have seen the Count conducting a service amongst some hundreds of slaves, “the Lord’s freedmen”—men in whom love to their Saviour, and faith in His love, were strong enough to overbalance the infliction of bodily sufferings such as we shudder to hear of.

After a prayer from one of the slaves, he was commencing his address with the words of one

of his favorite hymns, when suddenly the whole assembly broke out, in their own language, into the triumphant hymn—

“My Lord, my Lord, Thou hast redeemed me?”

Accustomed as he was to uncontrollable manifestations of feeling in the Moravian assemblies, the scene entirely over powered him.

These were some of the converts of the imprisoned missionaries.

* * * * *

On one of the Christmas holidays, about thirty years ago, amidst the snowy rocks and glittering icebergs of the north, a company of Greenlanders were gathered around the Mission-house at Lichtenfels, singing Christian hymns, and accompanying themselves with instruments.

They were too happy in the presence of their Saviour to heed the cold. “It was to them,” as they afterwards said, “as if they already stood before the throne of the Lamb, singing the new song of the redeemed.” And those who listened could not refrain from tears.

And within the houses grouped around them, you might have witnessed the sober and peaceful lives of Christian families, or deathbeds illumined by the “sure and certain hope” of those who depart in Christ—and all knit together in the imperishable love of Christian brotherhood. Yet not many years before, these very men had been savages, wandering from place to place, without

thought of God or duty, with no social bond but the necessities of selfishness—no hope beyond the deathbed.

Patiently had the missionaries labored for this end, enduring hunger and cold, and worse trials from cold and hardened hearts; through fifteen years trusting to the promise that they should reap, when not a sign of the harvest appeared. But at length, after the long polar winter, spring and summer had burst on them as it were in a night.

These were more of the fruits of the seed which had so long been buried and trampled under the soil in Bohemia.

If there was need of “long patience,” was there not reward for it?

But it would take far too long even to name the blessings which were showered on the colony of Herrnhut, and flowed from it, in those days of fresh love and life, when “the multitude of those that believed were of one heart and one soul, neither said any of them that aught of the things which they possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.” We, in our “majestic sobriety,” may reprehend such excesses of zeal and love; but they, in their “gladness and singleness of heart,” would have been far too happy to care about our reproaches: for “with great power” did many amongst them bear witness unto the resurrection of the Lord, “and great grace was upon them all.”

But one thing which happened amongst them is, unhappily, so singular in the history of religious controversies, that I can not refrain from mentioning it:—

The infant community at Herrnhut had been much disturbed by a certain controversy (I believe it was about the human nature of our Lord): there seemed danger of a violent rupture—but *they prayed together*, and read the First Epistle of St. John; and such a sense of their blessed and eternal oneness in the Lord Jesus, and such a glow of brotherly love, were diffused amongst them, that the schism was healed so perfectly as not even to leave a scar behind. All causes of division literally melted away, like a cloud or a snow-drift, in the light of Him whose manifest presence shall by and by dissolve all ice-bonds and ice-barriers amongst us for ever.

The Moravian Brethren have done little towards expanding before us new worlds of science or art—towards cutting new vistas into the depths of astronomic space, or geologic time—but who can count the souls to which they have opened that eternal kingdom where all shall know even as they are known?

They have done little for symbolic architecture and the glory of beautiful temples—but of the habitations of God which they have built through the Spirit, He only knows the glory and the number.

Their sole theology was JESUS—the external

Son of God, the crucified and risen Son of man, the Sacrifice, the High Priest, the Universal Bishop of His Church; the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

The foundation of their community, and their bond of fellowship, was no system of doctrines or Church government: it was "Christ Jesus the Lord"—"the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." For any mistakes they may have made in carrying out a church principle so catholic and so divine, our weak nature is responsible.

It is possible that, fixing their eyes too exclusively on the dying, rather than on the risen, Son of man—on the intense but finished agony, rather than on the eternal and actual joy it has purchased, dwelling on His bodily sufferings with a prolonged excitement of feeling which seems hardly scriptural; their piety may occasionally have lost itself in religious sentimentalism; but the love they bore Him was no mere barren emotion; and the crosses they bore after Him were neither self-imposed burdens nor mere devotional ornaments—and we may surely pardon—as He who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities doubtless has—the extravagances of a love which braved polar winters, and equinoctial summers, and long years of seemingly fruitless toil, for His sake.

With their failures we have nothing to do, except to warn us how unwise we all are when we abandon ourselves to any teaching but that

of the Word of God—or to blend with our confessions when, as members of the one family, we say—“All we like sheep have gone astray;” but the example of their single-hearted devotion and brotherly love is ours to rejoice in, with thanksgiving for ever; and the best part of it is, that these things are existing amongst us still.

Now, whilst I write, two Moravian brethren are laboring within the infected walls of a lazaretto in Southern Africa, having deliberately suffered themselves to be immured there for life, in order to reveal to the wretched inmates “the unsearchable riches of Christ.” What they are now suffering, we know not—but we do know that when they die there are others ready to fill their places.

With such a golden cloud of witnesses, linking the very air we breathe with the depths of the inmost heavens where the first Martyr rests in the light which shone on his dying eyes, who shall say that the ages of faith and love are past, and that the heart of the Church is palsied and grown chill?

Are not fresh springs of life ever gushing forth in our midst? Is not the very existence of the Church of God on earth a perpetual miracle? Is not a new creation commenced in every soul to which God says, “Let there be light?” Does not the morning glow around every awakened heart?

Is not *their* Father *our* Father? Is not the

Lord Jesus Christ the same to-day as when yesterday He said to them, "Follow thou Me," and, "My grace is sufficient for thee?" Is not the Holy Spirit still with patient love and undiminished might gathering and chiselling the living stones for the living temple? May we also go forth every morning refreshed and strengthened by draughts from the Well of Life? May not we also walk all day "in the light"—thus having fellowship one with another? May not we also lie down every evening with hearts and consciences "white and clean" as the robes of the Blessed before the throne—washed in the same "precious blood?"

And, oh, if our hearts thrill at the recital of holy deeds done ages since, must they not throb with redoubled life at the thought of such lives flowing parallel with our own day by day?

The love wherewith we are loved is as great, the arm on which we are invited to lean is as strong, the time in which we have to labor is as short, the eternity to which we are hastening—and which is hastening to us—is as long, the position in which we are placed is the very best in all the battle-field our God would choose for us. There is not a difficulty in our path which shall not be compelled to work for us, if we meet it in communion with our Lord. Are we also *overcoming*?

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